

Japan grants \$17.5m for schools in Gaza Strip

JERICHO (AFP) — The Japanese government granted \$17.5 million to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Sunday to build schools in the Gaza Strip, officials said. "This money will be used to build schools where they are most needed," said PNA Finance Minister Mohammad Nashashibi after the aid agreement was signed here with a representative of the Japanese embassy in Tel Aviv. Mr. Nashashibi said the Japanese gift would permit construction of sufficient classrooms so that public schools in Gaza would no longer have to organise three shifts of classes per day to accommodate all the students. "This will allow us to go from a system of three shifts per day to one shift," he said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الراي

Volume 21 Number 6673

AMMAN MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1997, JUMADA II 25, 1418

Price: Jordan 200 fils

Iraq wraps up U.N. debate with deputies calling for cooperation freeze

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq's parliament wrapped up a secret debate Sunday on threats by the United Nations to impose further sanctions amid calls by several MPs for Baghdad to freeze cooperation with U.N. arms inspectors.

At the end of two days of debate, the National Assembly submitted recommendations to Iraq's two most powerful decision-making bodies on "ways to confront American plans to attack Iraq's sovereignty, security and national unity," the official Iraqi News Agency said.

Iraq, under a crippling international embargo since 1990, holds Washington responsible for pressuring the U.N. Security Council into adopting a resolution calling for further sanctions if it obstructs the work of U.N. arms inspectors.

The chairman of the parliamentary committee on Arab-international affairs, Saad Qassem Hamoudi, told journalists he could not reveal the recommendations but said they would go to the leadership of the ruling Baath Party and the Revolutionary Command Council.

"They will take the adequate decisions regarding not only the latest resolution but also relations with UNSCOM and the Security Council," he said, without saying when any decisions would be made.

Deputy Speaker Ahmad Ayoub said he supported a report by three parliamentary committees on a freeze in relations with the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) on disarming Iraq.

Another member,

Khaled Douri, spoke of the "necessity for a new path to stop this international comedy [the embargo] which has continued for seven years and whose final act is represented by Resolution 1134 adopted against our people under criminal American pressure."

In a defiant stand on the final day of debate, Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz called on UNSCOM to change the way it operates and free itself of U.S. control.

"It is becoming more and more clear that this commission is an American institution whose functions are imposed by Washington," he said.

"We continue to stress the importance and need to readjust this commission so that its work is technical and not spying" on Iraq, he said.

Mr. Aziz said Iraq was in contact with members of the U.N. Security Council, which adopted Resolution 1134 on Thursday, to seek "a fair position."

Al Thawra, the ruling Baath Party newspaper, said: "The U.S. administration has put the Iraqi people in a tunnel without a way out. The Iraqi people must dig their own way out, and it is time to take action to put the record straight."

"We must rely on our own will to secure a lifting" of the sanctions in force since Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, it said.

"Iraq has the right to adopt a stand which will make the U.N. Security Council and the Special Commission in charge of Iraqi disarmament deal with it in a fair and objective manner," Al Thawra

said. Baghdad was looking for "a legal means, free of U.S. hegemony, for Iraq and the Security Council to honour their reciprocal commitments," it said.

Mr. Aziz told parliament in its opening session Saturday that Iraq would not make concessions to the United States, the key sponsor of the latest resolution.

"The Iraqi people and their wise leadership cannot submit to the demands of the U.S. administration and its evil aims," he said. "Resolution 1134 is based on provocations from members of the inspection missions to enter sensitive sites linked to Iraqi security and sovereignty."

Iraq's disarmament was already "achieved at the end of 1991 and the first months of 1992," Mr. Aziz insisted.

"In spite of Iraq's positive cooperation... toward the inspection teams, we have not succeeded in obtaining convincing results that facilitate the implementation of clause 22 of Resolution 987" on lifting a U.N. oil embargo.

Under the resolution, the embargo cannot be lifted until UNSCOM certifies that Iraq's biological, chemical and nuclear weapons have been eliminated along with its long-range missiles.

The latest resolution threatens to impose a travel ban on Iraqi officials who block UNSCOM inspections. It came after UNSCOM reported a series of incidents when its inspectors were denied access to sites.

Consultations among leadership, people can help Arabs enhance Islamic identity — Prince Hassan

MAFRAQ (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Sunday that Jordan will continue to deal with problems facing the country in a most rational and objective manner, saying that consultations among the leadership and people can help the Arabs enhance the Islamic identity.

Addressing a meeting attended by professors, mosque preachers and academics at Al al Bayt University in Mafraq, the Crown Prince underlined the importance of mosque preaching for the community, saying that the mosque's message should be objective and rational and attracting the attention of worshippers and positively affecting the faithful.

"I would like to stress the need for the mosque's message to be objective and attractive to the worshippers and I hope that the Friday sermon will focus attention on basic issues in the current difficult stage of our life," said the Crown Prince.

The Crown Prince discussed a number of issues facing Jordan calling on the youth to arm themselves with knowledge and ethics and remove the barriers that obstruct their path to knowledge and to seek a future with clear outlines.

The Crown Prince emphasised the need to exert efforts that project Jordanian achievements within their Islamic framework, stressing that Islam calls for active work to propagate Islamic teaching and values throughout the world.

Prince Hassan called for widening the base of information about Jerusalem "so that we can protect the Arab and Islamic identity of the city."

"When we speak about Jerusalem we are talking about an area equivalent to one fifth of the occupied Palestinian lands and we refer to a city that serves as a cultural and spiritual capital in addition of being a political capital of Palestine," Prince Hassan added.

"We have to warn against the continued emigration of Arabs from Jerusalem and we must recognise this fact and start a dialogue with all the faithful. We have to note that the Arabs still remaining in Jerusalem are no more than the number of Christian Arabs found in Sydney, Australia."

"Arabs should benefit from the experience of the past and from the renaissance of the Arabs, that dates back to different stages in the Arab and Muslim history. We should

employ that in the search for a better future," said Prince Hassan.

"It was difficult to arrange for such a meeting like this because of our daily engagement in political affairs. Seldom a month passes by without a new crisis or internal or external commitment preventing us from such meetings. I thank all those who suggested such a meeting in the current circumstances," Prince Hassan said.

"I hope that the meeting will not be interpreted as having a political nature or character but rather as an extension to previous meetings. I do not want to talk about the need for institutionalising such meetings in the future but I would like to say that we have to shoulder our responsibilities towards our Islamic message and identity."

Following the Crown Prince's remarks a discussion ensued in which the chief justice, the president of the university and a number of university professors discussed Arab and Islamic dialogue with the world, teaching in mosques of Islamic education and the projected World Zakat Fund.

The participants also discussed issues that face Jordan and the Islamic World, spiritual education and

Israeli jets raid guerrilla base

NAAMEH (AP) — Israeli warplanes fired missiles at a base used by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), killing a male nurse at the organisation's infirmary, the group said Sunday. Israeli jets fired four missiles at the base in the hills east of the coastal town of Naameh, 16 kilometres south of Beirut and later returned to fire another two missiles, state-run Lebanon radio reported. The PFLP-GC said the only casualty was a male nurse in the organisation's infirmary. "Such barbaric attacks shall not affect our struggle," the PFLP-GC said in a statement. The Palestinian guerrilla group opposes the Middle East peace process and has participated in attacks against Israeli forces in the self-declared "security" zone in south Lebanon.



Crown Prince Hassan addresses a meeting of dignitaries at Al al Bayt University in Mafraq (Photo by Yousef 'Allan).

extremism. Later, Prince Hassan met the graduate students. In remarks to the graduates, the Crown Prince underlined the need for creating an Islamic information network among the graduates in order to confront the distorted picture of Islam. He also referred to the role played by Islam in the propagation of culture and civilisation.

Jordan, Israel look back on a peace gone sour

AMMAN (R) — Jordan and Israel on Sunday marked the third anniversary of a peace treaty which King Hussein says almost collapsed when the Jewish state sent assassins on a mission to Amman last month.

No celebrations were planned to mark the accord, hailed at its 1994 signing as the start of the first "warm peace" between Israel and an Arab state.

Israel's embassy in Amman premiered a film which looked back nostalgically at the early days of peace, while Jordanian papers barely mentioned the treaty.

Israel's Ambassador to Jordan Oded Eran, acknowledging the "open wound" in relations caused by last month's attempt to murder Hamas leader Khaled Misha'al, said ties had been "marred by political upheavals and ups and downs in the peace process."

Aside from the attack on Mr. Misha'al, Israel's ties with Jordan have grown increasingly strained over its continued settlement-building in occupied territories and its foot-dragging on meeting peace commitments to Palestinians.

But, speaking at the film screening on Saturday

night, Mr. Eran said Jordan and Israel's continued cooperation showed that "common sense and common purpose" would eventually win over "short-sightedness and suspicion."

King Hussein, who went out on a limb in the Arab World last year to give a chance to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, had grown openly critical of the Israeli premier even before Mr. Netanyahu ordered the attack on Mr. Misha'al, Hamas's political chief.

Two weeks ago he said the whole Middle East peace process hung in the balance while Mr. Misha'al's life was in danger.

Public criticism of the peace treaty itself is still taboo in Jordan, as a handful of opposition candidates in November parliamentary elections have discovered.

Election hangers opposing "normalisation" with Israel have been quietly taken down by the authorities. Jordan, still seeking the economic fruits of peace, is also pressing ahead with joint projects with Israel.

But many government officials are steering clear of Israel for the time being.

While the speaker of the Senate, the chief of Royal

Court, and the speaker and a Cabinet minister all showed up at a Hamas dinner last week celebrating Mr. Misha'al's survival, none appeared for Saturday's film showing. Jordanian police shut off roads for hundreds of metres around the five-star hotel where the film was shown.

"The film represents the dream of peace as it was in the beginning," director Sharon Shamir told the audience of her documentary of the ground-breaking visit to Israel two years ago by comedians Nabil Sawalha and Hisham Yanis.

"It was a little different to what we are going through today," she said.

"I am with the peace of two years ago, not [the peace] now. I hope the peace will return to how it was," said actress Amal Dahhas, who accompanied the comedians on their tour.

Mr. Sawalha and Mr. Yanis, received threats in Jordan for making the trip to Israel, said in April they had cancelled a planned second tour in protest at Mr. Netanyahu's policies of increasing Israeli settlements on occupied Arab land.

"Netanyahu is no longer funny," Mr. Sawalha said at the time.

Tarawneh discusses peace developments with ambassadors

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh met Sunday with heads of Arab diplomatic missions in Jordan and discussed with them issues of concern to Arab states with particular stress on the developments of the Middle East peace process.

Dr. Tarawneh also discussed the coming Doha economic conference and the visit to Jordan and the Middle East by Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov. He also discussed preparations in Jordan for the general elections.

Following the meeting, Dr. Tarawneh said in a press statement that the meeting with the ambassadors was part of Jordan's on-going plans to consult with Arab states about issues that are of concern to the Arab Nation.

As to the Doha conference he said that Jordan is going to attend the meeting and has formed a delegation, noting that Jordan hopes to reap economic benefits from the upcoming meeting.

In reply to a question, Dr. Tarawneh said that peace is a

strategic option for the Kingdom expressing hope that there will be progress along all the Arab-Israeli tracks so that a permanent and comprehensive peace can be achieved.

Dr. Tarawneh expressed Jordan's welcome of the Russian foreign minister's visit which is due to start Monday hoping that it will help stimulate the peace process.

Noting that Russia is a co-sponsor of the peace process, Dr. Tarawneh said that Russia is a friendly nation and has weight in the U.N. Security Council and can influence the developments in the region and put the peace process back on track.

Dr. Tarawneh referred to his recent meetings with Mr. Primakov saying that he felt that Russia has a real interest in backing the peace process noting that Mr. Primakov will discuss various issues with the Jordanian officials and will follow-up on discussions held with HRH Crown Prince Hassan during his recent visit to Moscow.

Russian foreign minister denies missile sales to Iran

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov rejected on Sunday Israeli accusations that Moscow was helping Iran develop long-range ballistic missiles, but he apparently failed to convince his anxious hosts.

Mr. Primakov arrived here as part of a regional tour aimed at asserting Russian influence in efforts to revive the stalled Arab-Israeli peace process.

But his mission was quickly overshadowed by Israeli overtures over efforts by the radical Islamic regime in Iran to develop non-conven-

tional weapons and the long-range missiles to deliver them.

"The rumours that Russia is selling missiles to Iran are baseless," Mr. Primakov told reporters after meeting with Foreign Minister David Levy at the start of a two-day visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories.

Mr. Primakov's denial sidestepped Israeli and U.S. charges that private Russian firms had sent scores of engineers and technology to help Iran develop long-range missiles capable of hitting Israel, the Gulf states and even Europe.

Doubts surround Palestinian, Israeli talks in Washington

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) accused Israel Sunday of planning to sidetrack high-level negotiations in Washington this week to avoid tackling the key issues of Jewish settlements and further troop withdrawals from the West Bank.

Doubts over the Washington talks also persisted on the Israeli side, with Foreign Minister David Levy threatening to boycott the meeting because Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had yet to give him any negotiating guidelines.

PNA information minister, Yasser Abed Rabbo, said U.S. and Israeli officials wanted the Washington talks to avoid the core issues and deal instead with implementing minor clauses in interim peace accords.

Mr. Levy and PNA negotiator Mahmoud Abbas were due to meet later this week with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as part of a U.S. initiative to revive Israeli-Palestinian negotiations stalled since March.

Mr. Netanyahu authorised the construction of a controversial Jewish settlement on the hilltop of Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab east Jerusalem that sparked nationwide protest among Arabs.

The Levy-Abbas talks were originally to have begun Monday and deal with the issues of troop withdrawals and demands that Israel observe a "time-out" in the construction of Jewish settlements in occupied territories.

Agreement on these key issues would open the door for Israelis and Palestinians to launch accelerated negotiations on a "final status" accord for the Palestinian areas.

U.S. special envoy Dennis Ross spent three days in the region last week trying to set the stage for progress in Washington by resolving

Mubarak sets conditions for Egypt attending MENA

AL QANTARA (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Sunday said Israel must freeze settlement building in the West Bank before Egypt would consider attending next month's Middle East and North African (MENA) economic conference in Qatar.

"At least, a freeze in settlement [on the West Bank]," he told reporters when asked to detail what progress in the Israeli-Arab peace process Cairo wants before deciding to attend the Nov. 16-18 MENA conference in Doha.

Mr. Mubarak spoke at a ceremony in northern Egypt Sunday marking the start of a project to irrigate the north Sinai desert with water from the Nile.

Egypt and several other Arab states have said they oppose holding the Doha

conference, which Israel will attend, when the peace process has been deadlocked for eight months.

Arab states have blamed the Israeli government, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, for stalling the negotiations with policies including construction of new Israeli settlements in Arab east Jerusalem.

Mr. Mubarak told the Arabic daily Al Hayat on Wednesday that Egypt would decide whether or not to attend the conference in Doha "at the last minute."

He said Egypt "will make a decision three or four days before the start of the conference." He added: "Maybe a miracle will have taken place [by then]."

some of the interim issues, notably the long-overdue opening of a Palestinian airport in Gaza and the creation of "safe passage" corridors from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip.

But Mr. Abed Rabbo said Mr. Ross' mission failed and that as a result the Washington meeting was in jeopardy.

"Since the Ross mission did not achieve anything, the Americans are now proposing that the airport and safe passage become the major issues in Washington," he said.

"Ross is working to achieve what the Israelis want, to forget the real issues and to start talking about small side issues," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu has steadfastly refused to halt settlement building in the occupied territories despite U.S. and Palestinian complaints that this prejudices territorial issues due to be resolved in

the final status talks.

He has also refused to carry out troop withdrawals from West Bank rural areas, required under interim peace agreements, on the grounds that the PNA has failed to rein in Islamists in areas already under his control.

The self-rule authority believes that the aim of Mr. Netanyahu's right-wing government is to avoid turning any more land over to the Palestinians prior to conclusion of the final status talks.

Meanwhile, Messrs Levy and Netanyahu were due to meet Monday to discuss the foreign minister's complaints about the lack of a clear policy towards the PNA, officials said.

"I will not go to Washington as long as I do not know the true position of this government and what are the parameters within which I can work," Mr. Levy said in a television interview Friday.

Iranian opposition says one killed in Iraq attack

BAGHDAD (R) — An Iraq-based Iranian exile opposition group said Sunday Iranian agents killed one of its members in an ambush on a convoy of vehicles northeast of Baghdad.

The group said the machinegun attack occurred on Saturday afternoon when the car was travelling from Ba'quba, 60 kilometres from Baghdad, to a nearby Mijahideen Khaliq military camp.

The attackers were hiding

in palm groves in the area and fired at Mijahideen cars as they drove past, the group said in a statement given to reporters in Baghdad.

"At 5 p.m. Baghdad time Saturday terrorist agents sent by the Tehran regime killed one of the Mijahideen near the Iraqi town of Ba'quba," the organisation said.

It said Changiz Hardikhanlow, 45, was wounded in the attack and later died in hospital.

The Mijahideen, Iran's main opposition group, blamed what it called "the terrorists of the Iranian embassy in Baghdad which plans and executes these terrorist attacks."

The statement quoted the group leader, Massoud Rajavi, as urging the Iraqi government to "arrest and prosecute the terrorists and close down the Iranian embassy in Baghdad."

The organisation uses Iraq as a springboard for attacks

inside Iran and has several camps, equipped with heavy weapons, close to the borders with Iran.

The organisation's bases have been the target of air and rocket attacks by Iran and its office in Baghdad, now ringed with a concrete wall, has weathered several mortar and bomb attacks.

On Sept. 29, eight Iranian warplanes raided two of the organisation's camps inside Iraq.

ESCWA convenes meeting on development of water resources

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is organising an expert group meeting on the Development of Non-Conventional Water Resources and Appropriate Technologies for Groundwater Management in the ESCWA Region, in Manama, Bahrain, from October 27 to 30, 1997, ESCWA said in a statement.

The meeting is jointly organised by ESCWA and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through its regional office for west Asia in Manama and in cooperation with the government of Bahrain.

The meeting will deal with non-conventional water resources and topics related to the application of appropriate technologies for groundwater management in the ESCWA region such as: remote sensing, groundwater hydraulics, and groundwater protection. The relevant technical papers will be prepared and presented by experts supported by the ongoing extrabudgetary ESCWA/BGR (Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of Germany) technical cooperation project.

Participating in the meeting will be more than 60 experts, of which some 25 come from the ESCWA member countries, who will present over 30 specialised country papers.

In addition, the ESCWA secretariat will present approximately 10 working papers on the themes of conventional and non-conventional water resources.

Mubarak starts flow of Nile water to green Sinai

AL KANTARA (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak opened a tap to start water from the Nile River flowing down a canal toward the Sinai Peninsula Sunday, launching an ambitious project to expand Egypt's farmland.

Mr. Mubarak pressed a button to send hundreds of thousands of cubic metres of water from the Nile Delta rushing down the Al Salam Canal toward the region of El Arish on the Mediterranean coast of the Sinai.

The ceremony, also attended by top Egyptian officials and businessmen, kicked off a seven-year plan to convert some 160,000 hectares near El Arish into land fit for agriculture.

The irrigation water for the project flows from an eastern branch of the Nile Delta through four

tunnels dug under the Suez Canal, then along the 86-kilometre Sheikh Jaber Canal toward El Arish.

The first phase of the project is due to pump 250,000 cubic metres of water to irrigate 1,302 hectares of land daily in Sahel Al Tina, one of five areas in the northwestern Sinai. Egypt's Irrigation Minister Mahmoud Abu Zeid told Agence France Presse earlier in the week.

By the year 2004, the project will bring 4.4 billion cubic metres of water annually to improve the land in northwestern Sinai, according to the head of the project, Samir Hashish.

The scheme will help Egypt increase its amount of arable land, which now constitutes just six per cent of its territory.

Currently arable land is limited to the Nile Valley and several oases.

Sunday's inauguration ceremony marked some 10 years since construction on the project began.

The project builds on an idea initially proposed by former president Anwar Sadat after Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt in their 1979 peace treaty.

Part of Sadat's plan, which he quickly gave up, was to also provide Israel with Nile water.

The Sheikh Jaber Canal, which relays the water brought under the Suez Canal on to the north of the Sinai Desert, is named in honour of the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, who along with Saudi Arabia financed a third of its \$1.6 billion cost.



Lebanese Muslim Shi'ite shants slogans during a demonstrations called by former pro-Iranian Hizbollah leader Sheikh Sobhi Al Tufaili who has urged people to block roads in a continuation of the 'hunger revolt' in the Bekaa Valley of Baalbeck on Sunday (Reuters photo)

Lebanese protesters wound soldier

BAALBECK (R) — Demonstrators firing machineguns and anti-tank rockets wounded a Lebanese soldier Sunday during protests in the Bekaa Valley called by a former Hizbollah leader, a security source said.

Sheikh Subhi Tufaili, who led Hizbollah in the 1980s, had urged Bekaa residents to block roads in a continuation of the "hunger revolt" he began in the impoverished area on July 4.

In Britale, Sheikh Tufaili's home village 70 kilometres northeast of Beirut, a soldier was wounded when demonstrators fired machineguns and anti-tank rockets in an attempt to prevent troops removing burning tyres that blocked the road, the source added. Most of the firing was into the air.

Demonstrators standing near army armoured vehicles shouted "All hungry people unite," "Down with the government" and "No to high taxes," said a Reuters correspondent.

On Saturday, Sheikh Tufaili called for local residents to block the streets with agricultural produce in protest "against the high taxes and the government's policy of impoverishment."

The government had dispatched an extra 1,000 troops to the Bekaa Valley Sunday morning, raising to 3,000 the number of soldiers and police who had been patrolling the area since Saturday, the security source said.

The former Hizbollah leader denounced the use of weapons and called on his supporters to end their protest at 12 o'clock.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Ghida opens exhibition

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Ghida Talal yesterday opened a jewellery exhibition for the Lebanese designer May Rishani. The works of Mrs. Rishani are well-known for being rich in tradition. As a result of her ongoing research, she has found similarities in the roots of ancient jewellery and in the techniques that were used throughout the ages. She has used this as a basis for her work, and today she incorporates new techniques and calligraphic designs into her jewellery. The exhibition at Darat Al Funun in Jabal Luweibdeh will run for four days and part of the proceeds of the sales will be donated to the Friendship Society for the Blind.

Iran, Lebanon aim to boost ties

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran and Lebanon have discussed strengthening economic and cultural links and pursuing joint investment in various development projects, the official Iranian news agency, IRNA, said Sunday. Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, on a four-day visit here since Saturday, held talks with Vice President Hassan Habibi on "ways to develop bilateral cooperation and on regional and

international issues," IRNA said. Mr. Hariri said his country favoured greater cooperation with the Islamic republic in various economic fields.

Turk police detain about 650 illegals

ANKARA (R) — Turkish authorities detained about 650 foreign migrants on the south coast of Turkey Sunday while they waited for a ship to take them to Italy, a local police official said. He said the migrants from Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and Bangladesh were caught close to the village of Yesilovack and were being held in a sports hall in the nearby town of Silifke. Turkish authorities quoted by the state-run Anatolian news agency said deportation proceedings would be started. Turkey is a major transit route for migrants trying to travel from Iraq and other countries to the east to affluent European countries to the West.

12 killed in bus crash in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Twelve people were killed and 18 others injured when a truck carrying members of a tribe turned over on a road in southwestern Iran, a newspaper reported Sunday. The accident occurred

as the driver transporting 34 nomads lost control of the vehicle in Khuzestan province, Kayhan daily said.

Aideed to travel to Cairo today

NAIROBI (AFP) — Somali faction Leader Hussein Aidede is to travel to Cairo on Monday at the invitation of the Egyptian authorities, who are trying to end the crisis in Somalia, his aides in Nairobi said Sunday. Mr. Aidede arrived in the Kenyan capital last week en route to Cairo. His arch rival Ali Mahdi Muhammad is already in Cairo on a "private" visit and it was not immediately clear whether the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, which invited Mr. Aidede, would facilitate a meeting between the two faction leaders.

Briton gets four years in UAE jail

DUBAI (AFP) — A United Arab Emirates (UAE) court has sentenced a Briton to four years in prison to be followed by deportation for possession of hashish, newspapers reported Sunday. Michael Anthony, 26, was convicted in a Dubai criminal court on Saturday after he was arrested for keeping

Lawyer says that case of shot Kuwaiti MP being politicised

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A defence lawyer complained Sunday that the legal team representing a Kuwaiti MP wounded in a June shooting were trying to politicise the trial of five men accused of attempted murder.

Three prosecution witnesses were questioned in court after which the judge, Ibrahim Al Obeid, set the next hearing for Nov. 2 when MP Abdullah Al Naibari and his wife, Ferial Al Freih, will be summoned to testify. The three witnesses were the police officer in charge of the investigation and two men, an off-duty police officer and another Kuwaiti, who were near the scene of the

attack on June 6.

Mr. Naibari's defence team "are trying to politicise the case. Today's session did not include anything to help the court issue its judgement," said lawyer Najib Al Wugyan, representing Abdul Mohsen Al Rumi, one of the five accused. Mohsen Al Mutairi, a lawyer on the MP's legal team, said they repeated a call for Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Nasser Al Rodhan and former Oil Minister Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa Al Sabah to testify in court.

The same request has been made twice before, but has been turned down both times by the court.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:10...A Show With the Mouse
14:30...Cowboys of the Moo Mesa
15:00...Gillette Sports Special
15:30...Riding High
16:00...Animal Show
16:30...Ocean Girl
17:15...French Programme
19:00...News in French
19:15...French programme
19:30...News Headline
19:35...Neighbours
20:00...Comedy...Murphy
Brown
20:30...Baby/Jon 5
21:10...Highlander
22:00...News in English
22:30...Emergency Room
23:15...Homicide
23:59...End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:26...Fajr
05:43...Sunrise/Duha
11:19...Dhuhr
14:27...Asr
16:56...Maghreb
18:13...Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation

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Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
771351.

Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Armenian International Church
Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 688404

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.

The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Temperatures are expected to drop with skies becoming partly cloudy. There will be a chance of thunder showers in the eastern parts of the Kingdom and winds westerly moderate to active. In Amman, skies will be partly cloudy with a chance of scattered show-

ers. Winds will be southerly moderate and seas rough.

Min./Max. temp. 14/24

Agaba 19/30

Deserts 13/26

Jordan Valley 17/28

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 28, Agaba 34 Humidity

readings: Amman 31 per cent,

Agaba 25 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Youssef Naser 751144
Dr. Issam Al Asmar 890504
Dr. Khalid Klob 816715
Dr. Nidal As'ad 751672
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Baker 276852
Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Randa Shahn 995170

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 62111, 63777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Dept 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water & Sewage Complaints 89467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

J. Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Co. 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Luzmila 630195

Hussein Medical Centre 81381332

Khalidi Maternity 6428116

Akileh Maternity 6424112

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 6672279

The Islamic, Abdali 66612637

Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7771013

Al-Bashir 77511126

Army, Marka 89161115

Queen Alia Hospital 60224050

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Govt. Hospital (09)983323

National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hilma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:15 Samaa (RJ)

08:25 Damascus (RJ)

08:35 Jeddah (RJ)

09:50 New Delhi (RJ)

10:05 Beirut (RJ)

16:25 London (RJ)

18:05 Kuwait (RJ)

18:35 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)

19:05 Bangkok (RJ)

20:45 Frankfurt (add) (RJ)

21:30 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

21:45 Tel Aviv (add) (RJ)

02:15 Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

03:55 Kuala Lumpur, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

Other Flights

04:15 London (BA)

09:15 Cairo (MS)

09:30 Al Arish (PF)

11:45 Khartoum (SD)

13:45 Bahrain (GF)

14:30 Doha (QR)

15:05 Vienna (OS)

16:00 Dubai (EK)

18:00 Istanbul (SD)

20:00 Tel Aviv (LY)

21:10 Paris, Damascus (AF)

22:30 Athens (OA)

01:25 Amsterdam (KL)

Royal Wings (RW)

06:05 Tel Aviv (RW)

07:25 Amman (QAIA) (RW)

07:15 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

09:50 Agaba (RW)

11:10 Amman (QAIA) (RW)

12:00 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

22:50 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

06:20 Beirut (RJ)

09:00 Agaba, Frankfurt (add) (RJ)

11:00 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)

12:05 Kuwait (RJ)

12:15 London (RJ)

12:30 Cairo (RJ)

19:30 Tel Aviv (RJ)

20:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)

20:45 Abu Dhabi (RJ)

21:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

22:15 Damascus (RJ)

Queen distributes awards for children's literature

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Sunday met with 80 outstanding writers from Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq who participated in the 1997 Queen Noor Award for Children's Literature, according to a press release Sunday.

Six writers were recognised for their contributions, including two Jordanian writers, Ahmad Nus'imi (the author of "Salma's Clinic") and Fadia Qanawneh (the author of "The Flying Crocodile"), the statement continued.

Queen Noor presented awards to Mr. Nus'imi and Ms. Qanawneh in the fields of education and short story, respectively, and also inaugurated the Children's Literary and Arts Exhibition, according to the release.

Established in 1988 by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, this annual award encourages the production of quality Arab children's literature, including short

stories, novels, poetry, plays, folk-tales, and scientific works. A panel of distinguished Arab writers judges the entries of the participants, and winning works will be published by the NHF, the announcement continued.

Also attending the ceremony were the ministers of culture and youth and telecommunications and transportation, In'am Musti, the advisor to the Queen, and NHF Executive Director Yasser Tal, the statement concluded.



PRINCESS DONATES EQUIPMENT: Her Royal Highness Princess Haya, the honorary president of the Queen Alia Foundation for Hearing and Speech, Sunday donates hearing aids to Ministry of Social Development representative, who will distribute them to the needy children in Al Amal School in Irbid City. Princess Haya toured the various sections of the school, which was founded in 1978 (Petra photo)

Princess Rania inaugurates Wadi Rayan production centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Rania and Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Jordan Lewis Lucke today inaugurated the latest JRDP (Jordan River Development Project) project, the Wadi Rayan Production Centre in Northern Shouneh, according to a U.S. Information Service press release Sunday.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by officials from the Jordanian government and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector, the statement continued.

Princess Rania and Mr. Lucke had signed in July an agreement providing \$106,000 to JRDP in order to establish a production centre in Wadi Rayan to provide jobs for the area's residents, according to the announcement.

This project, the first of its kind in Jordan, will use locally-grown bamboo cane and banana leaves to produce wicker furniture that will be marketed in JRDP's show-

rooms in Jordan and exported to selected countries in the region, the statement read.

The project is being funded under USAID's Private Sector Services Project (PSSP), and is the final one within an \$8 million programme aimed at assisting and fostering the development and growth of private enterprise by upgrading business services through improved accounting, industrial management, computers and software service, and marketing, the press release concluded.

The court, presided over by Judge Yousef Fauri and including Judges Aref Syouf and Ahmad Ayash, ruled that "it is too early at this stage to contest the investigation procedures, and the court cannot issue a decision on this matter until it hears the prosecution and reviews the evidence."

The tribunal postponed the case to Oct. 28 to hear the prosecution's witnesses.

According to the charge sheet, the four men met in June of this year and planned to infiltrate Israel through Wadi Araba in southern Jordan during the month of Ramadan.

However, they were apprehended in July by the authorities, who were tipped off by undercover agents, before carrying out any attacks.

The prosecution is charging that the four belonged to the outlawed group Bay'et Al Imam (pledge of allegiance to the leader), of which 10 of its 13 members have received prison terms ranging from two to 15 years after being convicted by the State Security Court on charges of attempted sabotage and slandering His Majesty King Hussein.

Ms. Safadi's songs were mostly about national culture and romance.

instantly causing her death.

The spokesperson said her son, who was slightly bruised, was treated at the hospital and discharged.

Officials said speeding and changing lanes suddenly caused the accident.

The late Ms. Safadi, the only well-known Jordanian female singer, started her singing career in the late 1960s. She participated in several national and international events.

Ms. Safadi's songs were mostly about national culture and romance.

car that her 23-year-old son Michael was driving crashed into the fence,

Public sector health professionals suspend strike

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The public sector health professionals who had observed work stoppages for five days over a stretch of two weeks Sunday announced that they were suspending their action after the government expressed its readiness to meet their demands.

Doctors, dentists, and pharmacists employed by the public sector had been

striking at 41 hospitals and 429 health centres around the country to hack demands for higher salary allowances and better working conditions, as well as incentives such as scholarships and further training.

The end of the strike, which was announced at noon Sunday by Bassem Dajani, president of the Jordan Medical Association, Sa'id Abu Maizar, president of the Jordan Dentists Association, and

Abdul Rahim Issa, president of the Jordan Pharmacist Association, followed a 45-minute meeting with Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi.

During a press conference at the Professional Associations Complex, Dr. Dajani said the decision to suspend the strike was taken to pave the way for the government to implement previous agreements reached with the three associations.

Dr. Dajani said the Ministry of Health has agreed to pay the health professionals 60 per cent of the fees collected from the public for medical treatment, which now amount to JD793,000.

He said the three associations will follow up on discussions with the ministry on meeting the other demands, which included the following: increasing the pension to two-thirds of

the overall salaries, increasing the professional allowance from 90 per cent to 120 per cent, creating a housing plan, providing for health professionals to receive scholarships and training courses, and assigning seats in Jordanian state universities to children of health professionals.

The incentives for the health professionals will be worked out with the Ministry of Health, he added.

Four plead not guilty to Israel attack plot

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Four men accused of plotting attacks against Israel pleaded not guilty Sunday to the charges in a session at the State Security Court.

Abdul Rahim Yousef, 25, Mujahed Abdul Jawad, 29, Sa'oud Mohammad, 24, and his brother Issa, 21, are officially charged with possession of illegal explosives and automatic weapons with illicit intent.

Last week, the defence team contested the evidence collected and the investigation procedures that were carried out by the prosecution.

State Security Prosecutor Mahmoud Obeidat Sunday responded in court by presenting a three-page statement defending the investigation procedures and stating that the defence attorneys' arguments do not have a legal basis.

The court, presided over by Judge Yousef Fauri and including Judges Aref Syouf and Ahmad Ayash, ruled that "it is too early at this stage to contest the investigation procedures, and the court cannot issue a decision on this matter until it hears the prosecution and reviews the evidence."

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car that her 23-year-old son Michael was driving crashed into the fence,

Media is 'welcome' to watch elections — Majali



AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Sunday said the government will take a completely neutral stand and local and foreign media

representatives are welcome to watch the Nov. 4 general elections to determine if they are fair and free.

During a meeting of the Amman Governorate Executive Council, Dr. Majali said the errors that occurred in the voter lists resulted from some people who registered their names but should not have, since they had done so in the previous elections.

The Ministry of Interior was dealing with the situation and deleting the repeated names, he said.

Each candidate has the right to protest any repeats, and all candidates have been issued computer disks with the full list of voters' names, according to Dr. Majali.

Referring to the elections law, the prime minister said his government plans to introduce a modern law that addresses the needs of all sectors of society.

Magnetic voter cards that cannot be forged will be

distributed, he added.

At the meeting, which was attended by Minister of Interior Nahir Rashid, the prime minister said the government was taking all the necessary measures to facilitate the elections process and stressed that government officials are not allowed to campaign for any candidates and no one is allowed to receive the voter cards of other people.

Candidate's son arrested on drug charges This is a timed trap — Haddadin

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Anti-Narcotics Department (AND) announced yesterday that they arrested the son of a prominent candidate in this year's elections for allegedly smuggling more than five kilograms of heroin into the country destined for another Arab state.

The suspect, along with three other men, were arrested following the seizure of a truck carrying horses from Lebanon at a farm in the Jordan Valley, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, quoted AND Director General Colonel Nazih Shreideh as saying.

Khalil Haddadin, the candidate, who is campaigning in Amman's Third District, responded by saying that the arrest was a "timed trap."

"I do not know who is behind this trap, whether local or international parties, but I am sure of the innocence of my son as much as I am sure of the justice of our law," Mr. Haddadin, who heads the Jordanian Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party and is running for the Christian seat allocated to the Amman 3rd District, added.

"I will continue with my elections campaign and this is the destiny of fighters," he concluded.

Petra quoted Col. Shreideh as saying that his department, in collaboration with Lebanese authorities, learned that the shipment of horses to Jordan included drugs.

"Department officers kept close surveillance on the truck for 48 hours after it left Lebanon and crossed the Jordanian border on the way to its destination, a farm in the Jordan Valley," Col. Shreideh said.

According to Col. Shreideh, during the unloading of the cargo at the farm on Oct. 23, department officers

stepped in, searched the truck, and found 5.5 kilograms of heroin concealed in it.

Col. Shreideh said investigations and enquiries over the past three days resulted in the identification of the four suspects involved in the operation. They were apprehended and referred to court for trial, he added.

Col. Shreideh noted that drug smuggling through Jordanian territory and drug peddling inside the country have been declining lately, following several foiled trafficking attempts and the arrest of major dealers with police records.

Opposition officially launches 'Salvation Plan'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Islamists and eight opposition parties, as well as the professional associations and several independent personalities, reiterated yesterday their call for a general boycott of the Nov. 4 polls.

Speaking in a press conference for the official launch of a "national salvation plan," party representatives said the boycott was not their original political goal, but rather a reaction to government policies, stemming from what they described as "a general atmosphere of popular discontent and frustration."

"We are ringing the alarm bell," Muslim Brotherhood leader Jamil Abu Bakr told reporters, adding that the pro-boycott parties intended to hold a national conference of all pro and anti-boycott opposition groups after the elections.

According to Mr. Abu Bakr, the projected national conference will be charged with drafting a platform and

drawing up the guidelines for joint opposition action.

Hashd Secretary General Salem Nabhas said "the boycott campaign will be intensified," but stressed that it will also be "a peaceful campaign."

"We never planned to stand in front of the ballot stations and physically prevent people from voting," he said.

Firmly opposing the Wadi Araba treaty, the national salvation plan urged "support of the Palestinian struggle against Zionist occupation," and the rejection of Jordan being the substitute homeland for the Palestinians, the so-called "Jordanian option."

On the domestic level, the salvation plan, which was prepared by a four-member committee including Mr. Nabhas, Mr. Abu Bakr, Al Ansar representative Adnan Zahran, and an independent, Faris Fayed, demanded the repeal of the mid-May amendments to the Press and Publications Law, which it charged with "preventing citizens from exercising their constitutional right to free-

dom of expression."

The plan also requested the abolition of the controversial one-person, one-vote system, and accused various governments of "interfering with the legitimate work of professional associations, political parties, and civic societies."

In the first chapter, dedicated to political reforms, the plan called for a strict implementation of the Constitution rather than for specific constitutional amendments.

The separation between the three functions of the state must be respected, the pro-boycott parties urged, adding that the "constitutional text should be activated in all its parts, especially where it says that the nation is the source of all three powers."

One of the key-points in the opposition parties' plan for national salvation is "ensuring the total independence of the judicial authority and preventing the executive authority from interfering in any way with the judiciary."

In a chapter dedicated to

economic reforms, the plan adopted an anti-privatisation and protectionist approach, calling for an increased role of the public sector and a halt to "foreign and Zionist investments in our firms and economic institutions."

On the social and cultural level, the salvation plan opposed all forms of cultural normalisation with the Jewish state and upheld conservative stands in education and youth issues.

The parties signatories were Al Ansar, the Jordanian Arab Constitutional Front, the National Action Front, the National Democratic Popular Movement, Hashd, Al Haq, Al Mustaqbal, and the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party.

The 11 independents who signed the National Salvation Plan were Bahjat Abu Gharibeh, George Haddad, Hamed Farhan, Hakim Fayed, Rizq Bataineh, Sa'id Abu Mazer, Shahadeh Abu Sharif, Talal Abu Ryalah, Faris Fayed, Mahmoud Abdullah, and Majed Khasawneh.

Families of Jordanian prisoners in Israel losing hope for release

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The families of Jordanian prisoners in Israeli jails appeared to be less optimistic that Israel would free their relatives, despite assurances from government officials that the detainees would be released soon.

"Despair has almost overcome us," said Saleh Ajlouni, the brother of prisoner Sultan Ajlouni.

"We feel that we are like the deceived husband. We missed a golden chance that could have insured the release of our relatives," said Mr. Ajlouni, who was referring to the swap of two Israeli agents with several Jordanian prisoners in Israeli jails earlier

this month.

Jordan and Israel agreed to exchange Jordanian and Palestinian prisoners for the two Israeli Mossad agents involved in the foiled assassination attempt on a Hamas leader in Jordan on Sept. 25.

Since then, Israel has freed 18 Jordanian prisoners and a number of Palestinian detainees. But Israeli security officials said the Jewish state will not release prisoners involved in the killing of Israelis.

The release of eight Jordanian prisoners, detained in Israel since 1988, has been postponed by Israel, despite several statements by senior Jordanian government officials that all Jordanian prisoners would

be freed.

Last week, Fou'ad Shara'a, one of the Jordanian detainees who are still in Israeli jails, contacted Ahmad Nahar, a Jordanian diplomat at the Kingdom's embassy in Tel Aviv, who told him that negotiations are still under way to release them, sources said.

The diplomat told him that Israeli authorities are still "reviewing the files of these prisoners and will decide who, among them, will be released."

Statements by both countries on the number of Jordanian detainees in Israel have been contradictory. While Israel says that there are more than 30, Jordan say that only 23 prisoners are detained by Israel.

Those who are still in Israeli jails include Sultan Ajlouni, Fou'ad Shara'a, Amin Sane, Salem and Khaled Abu Galion, Jamal Mukahal, Bassam Mohammad Taleh, and Ra'ed Abdul Qadir Ibrahim.

The sister of Fouad Shara'a, Umm Faisal, told the Jordan Times that she has contacted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was informed that talks with the Israelis on the release of the prisoners have not come to an end.

Ms. Shara'a said they have been informed that the detainees are planning a hunger strike to press for their release.

She said a proposed sit-in by the families of these prisoners near the Israeli

embassy was planned last week, but was cancelled because permission was not granted.

Omar Mukahal, a brother of Jamal Mukahal, said his brother was still in prison, despite the fact that he was not involved in killing Israelis.

Mr. Mukahal said his brother, who was a member of a group that planned an armed attack against an Israeli target near the border with Egypt, was not released, but two of his brother's partners who took part in the attack were.

"The delay in releasing our relatives will make us think of other options which some people might not like," Mr. Ajlouni said.

WHAT'S GOING ON

NEW PUBLICATION

- Launching of publication entitled "Modern Art in Jordan" by Dr. Wijdan Ali at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts at 6:00 p.m.

FILM

- Silent German film "Metropolis" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabbal Amman at 8:00 p.m.

JEWELRY/DESIGN SHOW

- Jewelry show from Lebanon's "Sabika" workshop and show of designs by Lebanese artist May Rishani at Dar Al Funun, Jabbal Weibdeh (Tel. 643251/2), until Oct. 30.

EXHIBITIONS

- Graphics exhibition by Abdul Wahab Abdul Mohsen at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Nov. 5.
- Plastic (abstract) art by Iraqi artist Maha Isma'il at the Royal Cultural Centre, also displaying paintings by Dutch artist Jamal Khmalis, until Oct. 30.

- Ceramics exhibition at the Silsil Ceramics workshop, Jabbal Amman between 4th and 5th Circles, until Oct. 30 (Tel. 680128).
- Works by Bahraini artist Sheikh Rashid Al Khalifa at Darat Al Funun, Jabbal Weibdeh, until Nov. 15. Also displaying a new collection of works by contemporary Arab artists (Tel. 643251/2).
- Ceramics exhibition by Ra'd Daimi at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina, until Oct. 30.
- Paintings by Iraqi artist Walid Nasrallah at Hammourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street, until Oct. 28.
- Paintings by Abdul Qader Bakheet at Instituto Cervantes, Jabbal Amman, until Oct. 30.
- Exhibition of paintings and weaving entitled "Murmurs of Our Land" by Riham Ghassib and Bani Hamida at Bani Hamida House (Tel. 658896/7), until Oct. 30.
- Exhibition of Catalan masters of the 20th century entitled "Aurea Mediterranea" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until Oct. 28 (except Tuesdays).

U.N.: AIDS to become Asia's next scourge after currency crisis

MANILA (AFP) — AIDS will become the scourge of Asian economies, a U.N. official warned Sunday as the world's two most populous nations, China and India, reported huge obstacles in efforts to head off a looming health disaster.

Peter Piot, executive director of U.N. AIDS, a monitoring agency, said "in a number of years" annual losses in Asia would be measured in billions of dollars for medical costs, lost productivity and lost markets.

India, Indochina states, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics have seen the most rapid rises in infections in recent years, he told an Asia-Pacific AIDS conference here.

Developed nations have got a grip on prevention, he added.

The "major burden of the disease is still to come" in Asia, he warned.

Mr. Piot gave cost figures for Asia, but cited estimates that by 2007, \$2.8 billion would be spent every year for AIDS in Cambodia, where one of 20 soldiers and police there are now believed to be infected by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which causes AIDS.

He said Indonesia expects AIDS to consume a third of its health expenditure by 2005, while one out of every 100 adults in Vietnam could be infected by the turn of the century.

measures is "pretty soft investment that has to be made, not a matter of high technology," Mr. Piot said, and includes educating the public and making protection available.

"This is not high-tech, which is why we believe it can be done even with an economic crisis," he said, referring to Asia's currency turmoil which has slashed growth forecasts for the world's most dynamic economies.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) destroys the body's

immune system and is transmitted by sexual contact, blood transfusions or sharing syringes.

The conference was told the use of condoms to combat the spread of AIDS is generating friction in Asia with religious and cultural objections.

Paula Kelly, an AIDS coordinator for the assistance group CARE in Vietnam, warned the co-ference that "insistence on condom use can easily be the precursor of violence" by the man against the woman.

With "high illiteracy and great poverty it's (HIV-AIDS) bound to multiply" in India, Health Minister Renu Ka Chowdhury said. "There is no way to stop it if we don't take collective action," she told an informal discussion here.

In New Delhi, the ministry reported that only three per cent of Indians used condoms for birth control, with custom dictating that the women undergo sterilisation or take the pill. India has more people living with HIV than any other country in the world, said

Mr. Piot of UNAIDS, which estimates between three and five million people in India are infected by HIV.

The main potential threats in China were illegal drugs, a large "floating population" of economic migrants, as well as prostitution, once thought eradicated from that country.

Mr. Piot said the sexual mode of transmission was a rising trend there. A Chinese Academy of Medical Science report said that while the disease is concentrated on injecting

drug users in the province of Yunnan, there were now thought to be 420,000 prostitutes in China.

Millions of Chinese from the interior provinces flock to boomtowns in mainly coastal cities in search of work.

"One of the biggest dangers I see today is the perception that the epidemic is over," Mr. Piot of UNAIDS said, referring to Western advances which allow treatment by a cocktail of drugs to retard development of HIV into full-blown AIDS.

He noted that most treatments were too expensive for Asia and other developing nations, and that the biggest challenge was to maintain basic prevention efforts.

Asia now has "a window of opportunity to slow down and stop the epidemic which Africa doesn't have," he said, adding that it was a "historic responsibility on the leaders of the region."

The conference was told there were between five million and seven million AIDS sufferers in the Asia-Pacific region, compared to 14 million cases in sub-Saharan Africa. The U.N. estimates there are 3.1 million infections worldwide every year.

However, Mr. Piot told the conference there was a 100 per cent increase in reported HIV infections in Asia in three years which would double again by 2000.

Hashimoto vows to win Asian understanding of new defence accord

TOKYO (AFP) — Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto said Sunday he would try harder to win Asia's understanding of new Japan-U.S. defence guidelines designed to expand Japanese military ties in the region.

"We want to make more effort to gain neighbour countries' understanding," Mr. Hashimoto said at a naval review at Sagami Bay, 80 kilometres south-west of Tokyo.

A total of 46 military ships and 48 planes took part in the review, demonstrating missile launches in front of some 9,000 government officials and visitors.

Japan and the United States unveiled new defence guidelines in September allowing Tokyo to offer increased logistical support to U.S. troops in emergencies "in areas surrounding Japan."

Some Asian countries, mindful of World War II, have shown concern. China in particular has strongly criticised the accord, saying it reserves

the right to use force if there is interference by foreign forces over Taiwan.

In his address, Mr. Hashimoto renewed his pledge to submit legislation on defence cooperation, "I will take necessary measures to legally assure fulfilment of activities under the guidelines," he said.

Some opposition parties argue that the guidelines could violate the nation's pacifist constitution.

They specify new areas for Japan-U.S. cooperation, including access to more ports and airfields, reconnaissance and intelligence-gathering missions and joint operations to keep international sea lanes open.

The guidelines call for planning mechanisms to be established and common standards and procedures to be adopted so that the two nations' response to crises is as smooth as possible.

The agreement opens the way for joint military planning and "mutual cooperation planning" for contingencies.

Dissident demands release of political prisoners as Jiang heads for U.S.

BEIJING (AFP) — Prominent Chinese dissident Bao Ge issued an open letter calling for the release of 12 political prisoners Sunday, just hours before President Jiang Zemin departed for a sensitive U.S. visit. "According to the Chinese constitution, citizens are entitled to freedom of speech, publication, assembly, organisation, demonstration and protest," Mr. Bao said in the letter addressed to the Justice Ministry. "We believe no citizen who peacefully holds different political opinions should be detained or persecuted."

The Shanghai-based dissident signed the letter as a preparatory committee member of the underground group Voice of Human Rights. He called for parole, medical parole or release from labour-camp detention for Beijing-based dissidents Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan — the country's two most famous voices of opposition — as well as Liu Xiaobo, Liu Nianchun, Zhou Guoqiang and Li Hai.

The list also included Shanghai dissidents Yao Zhenxian, Yao Zhenxiang, Gao Xiaoliang, Han Lifa, Hu Kesi and Tan Zhihua. Despite its obviously strategic timing, the letter made no direct mention of Mr. Jiang's eight-day visit, which is set to provoke a rash of human rights protests in the United States.

Wednesday, Veteran dissident Qiu Yongmin also took the opportunity of the upcoming visit to seek the release of political prisoners. In a similar open letter,

he urged U.S. President Bill Clinton to pressure Mr. Jiang for the release of Mr. Zhou, Mr. Li and Liu Nianchun. One of China's few active dissidents, Mr. Bao, 33, was released in June after three years in a labour camp and has been under severe official pressure to leave the country in recent months.

He was arrested in 1994 after attempting a sit-in protest for the release of fellow dissident Zhang Xianliang. Earlier that year, he made a failed attempt to register his Voice of Human Rights organisation with authorities.

Beijing has in the past released or paroled famous dissidents ahead of high-level U.S. meetings in a bid to improve the atmosphere for talks.

No such move emerged this week, but Mr. Jiang announced Saturday that China would accede to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The move was immediately hailed by the New York-based group Human Rights in China. "By this act, Beijing is explicitly accepting the legitimacy of international monitoring of human rights conditions in China," said Xiao Qiang, the group's executive director.

"Human Rights in China hopes it will be followed with speedy action to implement the rights in the treaty. As a first step, we call on the Chinese government to demonstrate its commitment to the treaty" by releasing imprisoned human rights activists, Mr. Xiao said.

Sassou Nguesso installs new regime after Congo war

BRAZZAVILLE (AFP) — Congo's civil-war victor Denis Sassou Nguesso will crack down on the opposition and ban a number of political parties, sources close to the leadership said Sunday following the strongman's swearing-in as president.

The huge number of political parties will be limited and state institutions will be subjected to strong presidential government, the sources said, adding that elections could be organised within two years.

Mr. Sassou Nguesso pledged to "respect and defend" the republican ideal which he was sworn in as president Saturday by the supreme court, which he himself established under his ominously Marxist regime when last in power from 1979 to 1992.

The court was closed down by his predecessor Pascal Lissouba, whose forces he defeated to take power in a four-month civil war which destroyed the capital and cost 10,000 lives.

Mr. Sassou Nguesso did not say when he intended to hold elections during the swearing-in ceremony in Brazzaville Saturday.

Instead, the strongman announced that a "national forum for unity and democracy" would be set up without delay which would establish the length of a political transition period, set the date of national elections and seek to promote national reconciliation in the war-torn country.

He did not specify the composition of the forum, nor of the government of "national unity and public salvation" which he promised would be set up in the coming days.



Former Marxist military ruler Denis Sassou Nguesso, 54, is sworn as the new president of the Republic of Congo (Reuters photo)

Multi-party democracy was restored to the Central African country only in 1992 after 22 years of Marxism-Leninism, following a national conference held from February to June 1991. A total of 85 parties were created after the conference, representing Congo's 75-odd ethnic groups.

Alliances and reorganisation quickly gave the parties a regional character, with the country divided into three — the north, dominated by Mr. Sassou Nguesso, the centre, fiefdom of Bernard Kolelas, and the southernmost regions, the main stronghold of the vanquished Lissouba.

Mr. Sassou Nguesso charged that Mr. Lissouba's rule led to the splintering of the country along ethnic lines, and was responsible for two civil wars. In 1993,

94, clashes between Mr. Lissouba's army and Mr. Kolelas' supporters cost 3,000 lives, Mr. Sassou Nguesso said.

The new president has repeatedly stated that his "priority is to consolidate peace and national reconciliation." Cutting down on the number of parties is likely to be a means to that end.

Only those parties which are already represented nationally will be allowed to go forward in the elections, sources close to the leadership suggested.

Backed by his war-hardened Cobra militia, the newly installed president will be able to carry out his threat where he has previously been thwarted. An earlier attempt to limit party representation, when he was last president, was rejected by the national conference.

On restructuring the crippled economy, Mr. Sassou Nguesso said he would continue dialogue with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

He also promised to "regularise the salaries" of civil servants, whose income plummeted 27 per cent in 1995.

He pledged transparency in carrying out the privatisation of state companies, following union complaints that they were being kept in the dark.

The electricity, water distribution and posts and telecommunications companies are among the major state companies destined for a sell-off.

Some of the commitments are already contained in a programme of economic reform begun by Mr. Lissouba in conjunction with the IMF.

Indian bureaucrat sparks off protocol row with U.S.

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A protocol row with the United States surfaced here following an Indian bureaucrat's refusal to attend a meeting of defence experts in Washington, a newspaper said Sunday.

Indian Defence Secretary Ajith Kumar has rejected a proposal to attend the third round of Indo-U.S. Defence Policy Group meetings next month saying U.S. Assistant Secretary Frank Kramer was not his "equivalent protocol-wise."

The Times of India said the Foreign Affairs Ministry was upset over Mr. Kumar's stand.

"Kumar has acted churlishly," the daily quoted a foreign affairs spokesman as saying.

Sources in the Foreign Ministry said decision of the defence secretary, the highest ranking bureaucrat in the Defence Ministry, was "ill-timed" because both nations were trying to improve relations.

"Both countries have embarked on a path of strategic dialogue," the daily quoted a source in the Foreign Ministry as saying.

The United States is keen to improve relations with India after becoming estranged from New Delhi during the

cold war. It has traditionally been seen in India as being closer to Pakistan, with whom India has fought three wars since their independence in 1947.

The United States is also keen to tap India's potential as a consumer market, with a large segment of its 952 million people considered an emerging middle class.

"The question is not of protocol. If Mr. Kumar is so upset, he can send another person from the ministry who he thinks is an equivalent to Kramer for the talks."

"He should realise that in the present context, the substance of the talks at the Defence Policy Group is more important than who attends," the source said.

The Foreign Affairs spokesman said the decision of the United States not to supply F-16 fighter planes to Pakistan and its disapproval of Islamabad's policy towards the fundamentalist Taliban militia in Afghanistan were positive signals to India.

"If you consider these decisions... then the wisdom of the defence secretary to embarrass the Clinton administration needs to be seriously questioned," he said.

Latvia turns down Russian security offer for Baltics

MOSCOW (AFP) — Latvia's President Guntis Ulmanis firmly turned down an offer from Russia to act as guarantor of the three Baltic ex-Soviet republics' security, Interfax news agency reported Sunday.

"Security guarantees are not the sort of thing that one side chooses for another," Mr. Ulmanis was quoted as saying Saturday in response to President Boris Yeltsin's offer.

Mr. Yeltsin presented a formal document Friday to Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas that said "Russia is ready to contribute in resolving the security problems of Lithuania and the other Baltic states."

It was seen as a charm offensive aimed at persuading the small Baltic states to give up their avowed intention to join NATO and move firmly out of the Russian sphere of

influence.

Mr. Brazauskas gave a cautious welcome to the offer, telling Interfax Sunday that it was a "strong move," but needed further analysis.

He indicated Lithuania was unlikely to withdraw its application to NATO, saying: "Back in Vilnius we shall seriously discuss this (Russian) document. However, our foreign policy priorities will remain unchanged."

The 50-year Soviet occupation of the Baltics has left bitter feelings between many Balts and the Russians, although Lithuania is maintaining increasingly close relations.

Moscow also accuses Estonia and Latvia of mistreating their ethnic Russian residents.

Newspaper says van Gogh 'Sunflowers' may be fake

LONDON (R) — Vincent van Gogh's "Sunflowers", one of the world's most valuable paintings, may be a fake, the British Sunday Times newspaper reported, citing investigations by art expert

Geraldine Norman. It was the second time in four months that an art expert had cast doubt on the authenticity of the painting. In July, the London-based art newspaper said at least 45 works

attributed to the Dutch artist, among them the "Sunflowers", could be fakes. The painting was sold by the Chester Beatty family in 1987 to Japan's Yasuda Fire and Marine Insurance

Company for \$40.3 million. The Japanese owners said in July that there was no possibility the famed painting was a fake. Spokesman Yoshimi Takada told Reuters then: "We are absolutely convinced

that the picture is an original." According to the Sunday Times, British expert Geraldine Norman concluded that a Sunflower study attributed to the famous Dutch

artist was "almost certainly" the work of Claude-Emile Schuffenecker, an embittered Parisian art teacher who owned it when it surfaced at a Paris exhibition in 1901.

The auctioneers Christie's, asked to comment on the allegations of a possible fake, said in a statement that it saw no reason "to alter our original opinion that the 'Sunflowers' is an authentic work by van Gogh."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab weekly published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation

Established 1975

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Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephone: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.

Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Dispute can't go far

THERE ARE certain areas of public service which should stay above the fray, any fray, due to their indispensable role in oiling the engine of daily life. Government health departments are certainly one, if not the most important, of these services. That is why the public sector physicians and dentists and their employer, the government, should resort to other ways than confrontation and strikes to solve their problems.

Public health officials have legitimate grievances and every right to air them. Observing only partial work stoppages and not refusing to offer emergency medical services has been the right thing to do. But it might not be wise for government doctors to go beyond working to rule when the minister of health, Dr. Ashraf Kurdi, is offering to negotiate with them in good faith once the slow-down or partial strike is halted. We believe that Dr. Kurdi's offer should be taken up and accepted as the case indeed turned out to be yesterday. In return we expect the minister to be fair in dealing with grievances. Public health officials have a duty to the people but the country also owes them a fair compensation for their professional role in saving lives and caring for the sick.

The existing and still widening gap in incomes between private and public sector physicians and dentists suggests that something is terribly wrong with the current system. The affected professionals seek the bona fide application of the 1996 regulations on "hawafez" (incentives) as well as the modification of the existing rules and regulations on allowances, and on the civil service code, so that their real situation can be adjusted at least to the pre-1988 levels. These demands strike us as justified. The fact that those on partial strike can resort to courts to adjudicate their dispute with the government the minute the projected negotiations fail, however, is an added reason why the ongoing stand-off should be immediately ended. The judiciary should be invited to act as the arbiter of the dispute between the two sides so that adequate remedies can be judicially ordered and justice to all sides secured on sound basis.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Dustour's Abdullah Al Qaq addressed the two-week old health professionals' strike saying that an extended strike will seriously affect public health. Though staging strikes to back demands is a lawful act, an extended strike in this area will result adversely on the public and particularly the sick, said the writer. It would be most illogical for the government to turn a deaf ear to the demands of doctors, pharmacists and dentists who are responsible for the nation's public health, and who work day and night to serve patients and look after the sick, Al Qaq said. He urged the concerned authorities to open dialogue with the health professionals, understand their demands, respond to their needs and reach a compromise solution for the sake of the infirm and to ensure continued medical service to the public. Jordan's doctors have been a source of pride to their country for their achievements in many specialisations, and it would be most disgraceful for the state and the country as a whole if their services were not appreciated and if they were denied allowances they deserve, Al Qaq said.

Al Arab Al Yawm's Marwan Hazine focused on the role Russia could play in the peace process noting that Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov is currently touring the region to help stimulate the peace process. The writer said Primakov's visit follows on the heels of the U.S. envoy's trip which he said ended in failure largely due to Israel's intransigent position. Hazine said Primakov's visit is extremely important because he, unlike Middle East envoy Dennis Ross, is expected to pressure Israel. He said Ross was more or less playing the role of a "post man," not forcing Israel to abide by the rules of peace. Hazine said Primakov's tour follows a visit to Moscow by Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak who sought to revive Russia's role as a co-sponsor of peace and to bring her back into the peace arena and stem the U.S.' total hegemony over the issue. Primakov's tour in the region is definitely important at this juncture but what is more important, said the writer, is a Russian follow up to the trip represented in practical steps and initiatives that ensure fruitful and positive results.

Economic Review

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

Politics have no place at Doha

AS THE Fourth Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference approaches, this time at Doha, one cannot help but ponder some of the ruckus that goes with such conferences. Some of the issues raised regarding whether or not to attend this conference are economic, and others have nothing to do with the business activity, which by its very nature should be apolitical. The contention becomes doubly puzzling in the backdrop of a MENA region that has not been fairing well relative to other regions in the world, in the last several years — especially in attracting foreign investment, while it continues to suffer from major demographic and economic problems. Any attempt at reviving trade, whether at the regional or the global levels, should be welcomed by all. Contrary to any other kind of sentiment, an economic conference should be the most welcome of all events.

The picture for many of the countries has been more than bleak. The nations of the Gulf, which traditionally enjoyed high revenues are facing growing population pains: they need jobs for populations that have consistently outgrown the gross domestic product (GDP). Furthermore, Saudisation, Omanisation, Kuwaitisation and all other kinds of "isation" have proven to be expensive and inefficient job subsidy schemes: for each job, three jobs are required — trainee, trainer and worker. Moreover, oil revenues are dwindling due to greater efficiency in the industrial world and the worldwide

increase in sources of oil despite the continued presence of the natural resources in abundance in those countries and the high oil prices of last year. Therefore, the nations of the Gulf are badly in need of labour-intensive investment.

Other nations such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon need to attract greater foreign direct investment, particularly in services and manufacturing to shift labour from agricultural employment to more value-added type industries. In 1970 the ratio of the labour force employed in agriculture in Egypt, Jordan and Syria were 52 per cent, 28 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively. By 1990, the percentage of labour employed in agriculture of the total labour force were 43 per cent, 21 per cent and 34 per cent. Additional shifts from agricultural employment to manufacturing and services will help boost many of these economies, especially since water is an extremely scarce commodity.

Central governments continue to be the major source of spending in many of the regional economies, which is a good reason for attempting to attract foreign investment. In 1995, the government revenues as a per cent of the GDP of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon were 42 per cent, 38 per cent, 28 per cent, 24 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. (The revenues of the central Chinese government, heavily planned/socialist economy, for the same year were only 17 per cent of GDP). In the same year, spending as a per cent of GDP by central gov-

ernments outpaced revenues in each of these countries: Egypt spent 43 per cent of GDP, Israel spent 45 per cent, Jordan spent 32 per cent, Syria spent 27 per cent and Lebanon spent 26 per cent.

Some businesses speak of boycotting the MENA conference at Doha, which is a strange and almost heretical stance. Business is usually apolitical. What does business care if a country is represented or not? Competition strengthens and absence from international and regional fora has never worked in favour of Arab causes. In a zero-sum game as MENA where the gains of one player are the losses of the other, those who present their countries as modern open economies that are ready to receive investment will be the winners, and those who shy away from competition are indirectly causing harm to their economies and themselves. Furthermore, economic theory underscores that the most successful boycotts are those conducted by large economies that control most of the trade, otherwise they fail.

The MENA at Doha is a window of opportunity to the nations of the region, especially ones like Jordan which has been faithfully implementing economic reforms and removing market distortions. Luckily, this conference is not being oversold as in the case of past ones; it is simply being viewed as an opportunity to tell the world about Jordan's great achievements, which are plenty.

Human Rights File

Netanyahu is undeserving of peace process

By Waleed M. Sadi

IT HAS been 18 months since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu assumed power. There is unanimity on both sides of the fence that during that period the peace process did not advance an inch notwithstanding the "excitement" about the Hebron deal. There is also wide consensus that for the remaining period of Netanyahu's rule, the peace process is projected also to stay where it has been since June 1996 when the Israeli prime minister was elected. If anything, instead of registering any meaningful advancement, there is a growing fear that the peace process may regress into the pre-Madrid peace conference era.

The evidence supporting this thesis is overwhelming from Arab, Israeli and international sources. Right after the election of Netanyahu, Lea Rabin, the widow of the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin depicted the Likud leader as part and parcel of the Israeli body politic that assassinated her husband for no reason other than that he was the architect of the peace process with the Arabs. Ehud Barak, the current leader of the Labour Party was no less blunt in calling Netanyahu all sorts of names which suggest that the man cannot be trusted. Former Prime Minister Shimon Peres was equally suspicious of the ultimate intentions of Netanyahu and viewed his election as a death sentence for the peace process.

The Arab side is obviously even more troubled by the rise to power of Netanyahu. His Majesty King Hussein has repeatedly expressed his utter disappointment with the Israeli leader for breaking his promises to him on several occasions. The aftermath of the failed attempt on the life of Hamas leader Khalid Nisha'al in Amman at the hands of a Mossad team further exacerbated the tense relations between Jordan and Israel. As recent as a few days ago, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak reiterated what he has always been saying, that Netanyahu cannot be trusted. Mubarak referred to Netanyahu as the chronic promise breaker! The Palestinians including their leadership hold Netanyahu in even lower esteem. The Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has repeatedly expressed his mistrust of the Israeli prime minister.

On the international level there is hardly any leader who holds high regard for Netanyahu. It is an open secret that President Bill Clinton is deeply worried about Netanyahu's state of mind. Clinton's endorsement of Peres over Netanyahu during the June 1996 Israeli elections was ample evidence of how Washington views the dire fallout from the election of Netanyahu. Practically all the leaders of Western European nations have expressed similar disappointments with Netanyahu on more than one occasion. The same goes for Latin American, Asian and African countries.

To sum up, if this is the verdict of the entire human race, why then honour Netanyahu and his inner circle of allies with the continuation of the peace process during the remaining duration of his term. Netanyahu has some 30 odd months left of his term. Why boost his chances for reelection for another disastrous four years by pretending that the peace process is still alive and kicking? All sides which share a common anxiety about Netanyahu should synchronise their acts so that his reelection becomes a faint possibility instead of a real probability. The international community has already put up with one third of Netanyahu's rule, it can easily put up with the rest of his tenure as long as there is agreement among the major players that four years of Netanyahu is more than the world can tolerate.

Of course in the final analysis it is the Israeli voters who will have to determine their future leadership. But once the Israelis are served with clear notice that Netanyahu means the end of all peace negotiations on all fronts, they can be expected to draw their own conclusions and choose another generation of leadership which has their long-term interest at heart. I am afraid that even pretending that peace talks are still being pursued may give Netanyahu a boost that we all would wish to avoid.

To be sure the peace process is not dead. The quest for peace is irreversible. But to keep it alive, we must stop its current rape and save it from the whims of the minority that is determined to deal it a death blow.

LETTERS

Family is not an issue

To the Editor:

IN THE article "3rd District, a Barometer of Political Atmosphere" (Jordan Times, Oct. 25), an "informed source" was quoted as saying that "Ms. [Emily] Naffa" has more chances of winning the [3rd District] Christian seat not only because of her 42-year experience as a politician and a women's rights activist, but also because her Communist Party Secretary General Yacoub Zayaddin transferred his tribe's votes from his hometown, Karak, to the 3rd District."

This information is both baseless and misleading. As someone who ran and won a parliamentary seat representing Jerusalem as far back as 1963, I firmly believe that deputies should be elected on a political platform, personal merits and capabilities, and not on the strength of their family or tribal affiliations.

When, in 1993, I myself ran in the elections for the same district seat that Ms. Naffa is contesting this year, I did not allow any of my family members to transfer their votes from Karak to Amman, even though I could have won with the help of only some tens of votes at the time.

At the very least, the "informed source" that you quoted in the story could have been asked to identify himself (or herself) before you decided to print his (or her) allegation, which is in this case but a fabrication.

Dr. Yacoub Zayaddin
Jordan Communist Party
Amman

Oslo four years on — the sceptics vindicated

By Khalid Amayreh

WHEN YASSER Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin signed the Oslo accords at the White House on September 14, 1993, much of the world went into raptures over what was described as "a historic breakthrough." Newspapers like the Washington Post and The New York Times were carried away by the false euphoria. The Post described the agreement as "a giant leap of faith for a sacred land," while The Times argued that it represented "a triumph of hope over history."

For his part, Yasser Arafat sought to sell the vague accords to a sceptical Palestinian public as the first step towards the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. The Israelis, however, were markedly non-committal, often arguing that they understood Oslo to mean limited Palestinian autonomy whereby the ultimate sovereignty remains, more or less, in Israel's hands.

Now, four years after that famous White House handshake, the Oslo accords seem to be in a moribund state, kept nominally alive only by artificial means. The Israeli occupation of the Palestinians' land and life is now harsher and more debilitating than ever. Palestinian towns and villages in the West Bank and Gaza are effectively reduced to large, crowded detention camps. A collective claustrophobia of the soul is gripping the Palestinians by the throat, as they are confined to their immediate places of residence.

In short, the life of the average Palestinian has become an enduring hell, so much so that many people, and their number is steadily increasing, are now almost nostalgic for the days of direct Israeli occupation. The dreams of freedom have evaporated, the euphoria gone, and violence is re-imposing itself on the region as the ultimate arbiter. The Palestinians have not achieved justice, nor the Israeli security.

Ironically, many Palestinians welcomed the Oslo accords initially because they thought they would eventually deliver them from the shackles of Israeli domination. However, with the passage of time, and seeing how the agreements were being implemented on the ground, a collective feeling of being

cheated and deceived began to replace whatever enthusiasm the Palestinians ever had for the agreement. Israel's grip has simply been made tighter, the hope for freedom and liberation has collapsed, the dream has turned into a nightmare.

'The peace is killing us'

Four years ago, opposition to the Oslo accords was largely confined to the intellectual sector and the more politicised segments of society. In addition to the Islamist movement. Now, however, the "rejectionists" have been joined by many ordinary citizens who have come to feel betrayed and cheated by a "peace" process that has only served to constantly lower the ceiling of Palestinian aspirations and expectations.

"This peace is killing us," complained an unemployed Hebron man who used to make a living selling second-hand goods in the streets of East Jerusalem. "They've got everything they want, and we've got virtually nothing. Getting a work permit or a VIP card for a Palestinian [National] Authority (PNA) official has become our most ambitious goal," he added in bitter frustration.

Dr. Aziz Haydar, director of the Al Quds University Regional Studies Centre, believes that the current mood of depression stems mainly from the collapse of the high hopes which the PLO sought to build in Palestinian hearts and minds to sell the Oslo process. Haydar argues that not only have the dreams not come true, but the Palestinians have actually been exposed to "a new and more sinister form of occupation."

"In the eyes of the world, the Palestinians are now at least partially free, they have a president, a Legislative Council, an army and a state in the making. However, this is all pie in the sky since Israel continues to control the oxygen we breathe and the water we drink. Even Yasser Arafat can't leave the Gaza Strip freely," says Abdul Jawwad Maraka, an outspoken critic of the Oslo accords.

Maraka argues that through Oslo, Israel has been able to rid itself of the prospect of a bicomunal state, while at the same time maintaining its grip on the Palestinians more effectively and more efficiently than ever before.

Land and water

Indeed, the Israelis (both Labour and Likud) have done everything they could to weaken Palestinian faith in Oslo. Settlement construction on the West Bank has increased by 30 per cent since September 1993, with tens of thousands of hectares of Arab land confiscated for settlement expansion. Moreover, 530 Arab homes have been destroyed for a variety of concocted reasons. Around 2,000 more homes are scheduled for demolition, mainly for the purpose of checking Arab demographic growth in East Jerusalem.

Furthermore, the Arab and Muslim identity of East Jerusalem has nearly been obliterated as Israel steps up the sinister policy of ethnic cleansing against Palestinians. This usually has two manifestations, withdrawal of residency rights from East Jerusalem Palestinians and denial of building permits. In the meantime, the occupation authorities continue to deny both Muslims and Christians access to the holy places in the city.

In the West Bank itself, Israel, thanks to Oslo, has effectively retained most if not all of the assets while throwing off all the liabilities to Yasser Arafat. So, for example, when Palestinian towns are denied drinking water for prolonged periods, as is often the case (the Israelis control the flow), the blame is pinned on Arafat. Indeed, on many occasions when Palestinians complained of lack of a water supply, Arafat would only dismiss them with remarks such as: "I have more important issues to deal with, go and see Saeb Ureikat (minister of local government)." But Ureikat has no answer, since the Oslo accords allow Israel absolute control of water sources.

But Palestinian indignation is over much more than just water. The West Bank, supposedly earmarked for a Palestinian state, has been replaced by a series of scattered Bantustans and an Israeli-dominated Jerusalem. Palestinian population centres have become like isolated islands in a sea of Israeli settlements.

The PNA, which was initially welcomed on the premise that it would accelerate Palestinian emancipation, has been a big disappointment, a fiasco even to some. The PNA has also turned out to be a manifestly corrupt autocracy run by one man,

Yasser Arafat, who holds all the reins, controls all the money and takes all the decisions.

Added to that is the fact that the PNA often acts at Israel's beck and call, in effect doing the Israeli army's dirty work in the West Bank. When Arafat hesitates to heed Israel's dictates, Netanyahu accuses him of "dragging his feet in fighting terror." However, when Arafat does the dirty work, e.g. carrying out mass arrests among the opponents of the Israeli occupation, he succeeds only in creating the image of "collaborator" for himself, while getting virtually nothing from Israel. Needless to say, continual Israeli bullying, coupled with Arafat's inherent powerlessness, has resulted in the chairman becoming a humbled supplicant for Palestinian rights instead of the "equal partner" he had once thought Oslo would make him.

In fact, the overall outlook seems so bleak for Palestinian rights that some Palestinian intellectuals have come to consider the Oslo agreement an Israeli-American conspiracy aimed at liquidating or completing the liquidation of the Palestinian issue. Professor Nasser Aruri, a Massachusetts-based Palestinian intellectual from Ramallah, contended recently that the Oslo accords left "four million Palestinian refugees on the back burner. The would-be catalyst for Arab unity has become the worst example of segmentation. The oppressed have become the oppressor, the revolutionary collaborator and the resistor quiescent."

Today, in light of the current state of affairs in the West Bank, there are few who would disagree with Aruri's assertions. The recent violence in Jerusalem is a living testimony to the failure of Oslo. Obviously, this means that Oslo has achieved neither justice for the Palestinians nor security for Israel. Worse, time is running out, and may have already run out, for a peaceful settlement between Israelis and Palestinians. Oslo was a runt, as deformed as the lop-sided balance of power that brought it into existence. A bad start usually makes for a bad ending. In the current Palestinian context, this seems to need no further proof.

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Civil Service Consumer Corporation brings NAF beneficiaries under its umbrella

By Samir Ghawi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In implementation of the Cabinet decision last month to allow the beneficiaries from the National Aid Fund (NAF) to benefit from the services that the Civil Service Consumer Corporation (CSCC) provide, nearly 5,000 new beneficiaries will be given CSCC cards next month.

CSCC Director General Ahmad Kreishan told the Jordan Times Sunday that the 5,000 cards represent only the first batch of beneficiaries whose names were sent by NAF to the corporation for review and control purposes.

NAF Director General Adel Shamayleh said around 33,000 families are

listed as beneficiaries who receive between JD20 and JD60 of cash aid each month.

"We shall continue issuing cards upon reviewing and registering each batch of names that we receive from NAF," Mr. Kreishan said noting that the CSCC wants to make sure that the NAF beneficiaries are not registered in the regular lists which cover around one million civil servants.

Mr. Kreishan said the distribution of the cards will be the responsibility of NAF which will handle such a task through its offices around the country.

According to Dr. Shamayleh, NAF is studying how to pay the 500 fils per card that the CSCC charges hut, he added,

NAF will most probably bear the cost which could reach JD20,000.

The CSCC chief emphasised that the corporation will continue to review and re-examine the names that NAF will provide noting that the government intends to do all it can to ease the burden of high cost of living on the less fortunate. The new beneficiaries will be able to obtain foodstuffs, home appliances and other goods that the CSCC sells at its various outlets.

Asked whether these new beneficiaries would be burdening the corporation, Mr. Kreishan said the income of the less privileged is so minimal that they will not be putting additional pressure on the operations of the CSCC.

Jordan's U.S. week concludes with a success — Mulki

AMMAN (Petra) — The "Jordan economic week" which ended last Thursday in the U.S. state of Michigan has achieved great success and was considered as a first step for Jordanian products to be marketed in the United States, according to Minister of Industry and Trade and Supply Hani Mulki.

Speaking upon his return to Amman from Detroit Dr. Mulki said that the week resulted in the conclusion of numerous contracts for the sale of Jordanian textile products, industrial marble, office equipment and vehicle tools to the U.S. markets.

The American market is large and promising and can absorb a great part of Jordanian products, said the minister.

Dr. Mulki said that a technical delegation representing the Ford Auto Company is expected to visit Jordan next month in order to examine the intermediary products that can be used in the American industry like upholstery of cars, plastics, tyres and car filters etc.

He said that American businessmen have expressed interest in the Jordanian food processing industry adding that at

least one contract for the purchase of Jordanian processed food has been concluded with a Jordanian firm.

During the week long activities Jordan organised a seminar to explain the investment climate in the Kingdom attended by 1,200 personalities representing major American firms, adding that U.S. Congress members and the governor of the state of Michigan visited the Jordanian Trade Exhibition which was organised as part of the Jordan Week activities.

The minister said Jordan seeks to expand its markets abroad through trade with the Arab, Asian and European countries as well as the U.S. He said his ministry is now studying the prospects of marketing Jordanian products in South America.

Dr. Mulki announced that agreement has been reached with the American Department of Commerce on organising two seminars in Amman in December for Jordanian industrialists in collaboration with American experts in industry in order to orient Jordanians on methods of marketing Jordan's products in the U.S.

New industrial bank opens in Qatar

DOHA (R) — Qatar's Minister of Finance, Economy and Trade Sheikh Mubammad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani Sunday opened the doors of a new bank for industrial projects.

The Qatar Industrial Development Bank will provide long- and medium-term soft loans and assist and guarantee loans from other local or foreign institutions.

The bank is capitalised at 200 million riyals (\$54.9 million). An emiri decree setting up the bank allows it to raise the capital to 500 million riyals (\$137.3 million) if needed.

The bank is 50 per cent owned by the government, 20 per cent by Qatar National Bank, 10 per cent each by Qatar Navigation and Qatar Insurance and five per cent by Doha Bank Ltd.

Other shareholders are the Commercial Bank of Qatar with 2.5 per cent, Al Ahli Bank of Qatar with 1.5 per cent and Al Khaleej Insurance with a one per cent

stake.

Sheikh Abdullah Ben Saud Al-Thani, deputy governor of Qatar's Central Bank and chairman of the new bank, said at the opening ceremony that the bank would finance up to 60 per cent of the total value of projects and charge interest at half the borrowing rate prevalent in the local market at any time.

Loans would be repayable over a maximum of 10 years, including a two-year grace period.

Sheikh Abdullah said priority would be given to industrial projects which use raw materials and resources available locally or in Gulf Cooperation Council states and are non-labour intensive. Local equity in the projects should not be less than 51 per cent.

The Gulf Cooperation Council groups Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.

China's growth, inflation to hold steady in 1998 — chief economist

BEIJING (AFP) — China's economic growth and inflation in 1998 will stick close to the levels seen this year, State Statistics Bureau spokesman and chief economist Qiu Xiaohua Sunday was quoted as saying.

Gross domestic product (GDP) growth will be nine to 10 per cent, and inflation no higher than five per cent, the official China

Daily Business Weekly Sunday quoted Qiu as telling a symposium.

"Flexible structural adjustments" — including interest rate revisions and increased investment in infrastructure and housing — are likely, but the central government will continue to make stability the number-one priority and make no moves to stimulate growth, he said.

China's central bank Wednesday imposed moderate interest rate cuts ranging from 1.1 percentage points on bank deposits to 1.5 percentage points on loans.

Earlier in the week Qiu announced that economic growth had slowed to 9.0 per cent in the first three quarters of 1997, while retail prices rose just 1.3 per cent year-on-year.

\$46m Saudi-Japan textile mill to go on stream in 1999

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia's first joint venture textile company is due to go on stream in early 1999 and will supply the Gulf region and neighbouring countries, the daily Saudi Gazette said Sunday.

The project, which is expected to cost 172.5 million riyals (\$46 million), is a joint venture between the Al-Ahsa Development Co and a consortium of Japanese companies in the industrial city of Al-Ahsa in Saudi Arabia's eastern province.

Al-Ahsa Development controls 76 per cent of the capital and the consortium,

which includes Marubeni Corp. and the Japanese International Development Organisation, holds the rest.

"The textiles will initially be marketed in the kingdom... later (they) will be exported to the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council states) and other Islamic countries," the paper said.

The company has said Marubeni would provide the technical services and know-how through a Japanese company which specialises in textile production.

Coiffeur Nabil Majdoub is back to his salon in Sweifeh Amman after he has been invited to take part in the international hairdressing festival for:

L'OREAL of Paris
Toony and Guy (TIGI) of London

Carita Vidal Sassoon of London whose activities were held in Paris and London during Oct 11-23 and displaying the Latest in hairdressing for Ladies for the year 98.

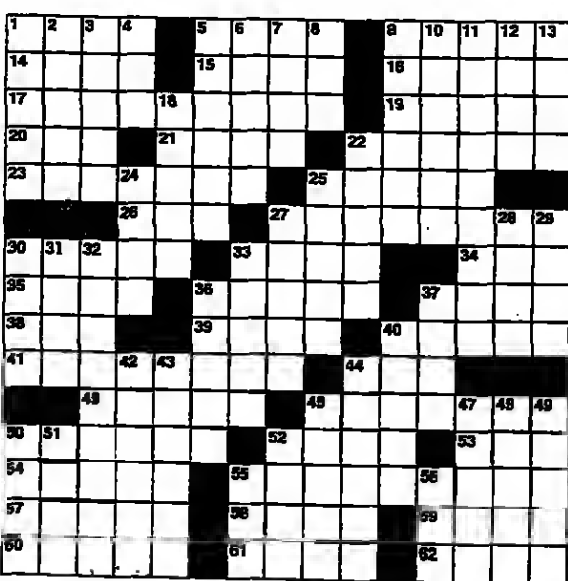
Mr. Nabil will demonstrate his new experience in his Coming show at Amman-Intercontinental on Oct 11th 97.



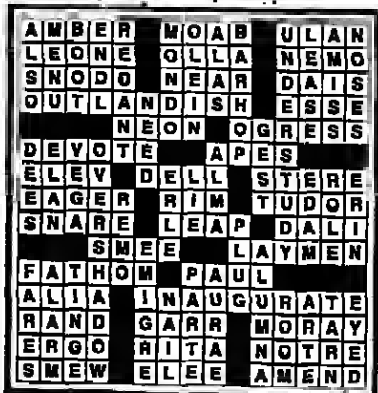
THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- Look over
 - Tongue in Ay
 - Sounded like
 - Palo
 - Active one
 - clato
 - Dime novel
 - Tropical herb
 - One — million
 - Check
 - Soundred in London
 - Bowers
 - Knee-jerk
 - Roulette bet
 - Random put-downs
 - Certain berth
 - Not even
 - medicore
 - Type of chart
 - for thought
 - Bombastic
 - Spanish lady
 - Table scrap
 - Landed
 - Beelzebub
 - Rich supply
 - Scout group
 - Ancient temples
 - Colossal
 - Fished
 - Catalogue
 - Fit — fiddle
 - Money
 - Cook's need
 - Ran in neutral
 - Gawk
 - Emerald tale
 - Tidies up
 - off (drove)
 - God of war

- DOWN
- Having a flavor
 - Duplicate
 - Flower perfume
 - Hill, San
 - Francisco
 - Improved copy
 - Plans
 - Appear
 - Goof
 - Breakfast drinks
 - of Blue
 - (film)



by C.F. Murray



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- Deteriorated
- drastically
- Sea bird
- Charished
- Willow wicker
- Talk to court
- Brought up
- Perch
- Assume as fact
- Turner of song
- Playwright
- O'Casey
- Saucers in space?
- Haven
- Rainbow's
- bonanza
- Hills, IL
- Yawned
- Writer Richard
- Henry
- Out
- Phoned
- Works dough
- out
- (dispensed)
- Name
- Zenith's
- opposite
- Granoble's river
- Gives a hoot
- Middle East
- prince
- Stem joint
- Theater box
- Vessel
- Grassland

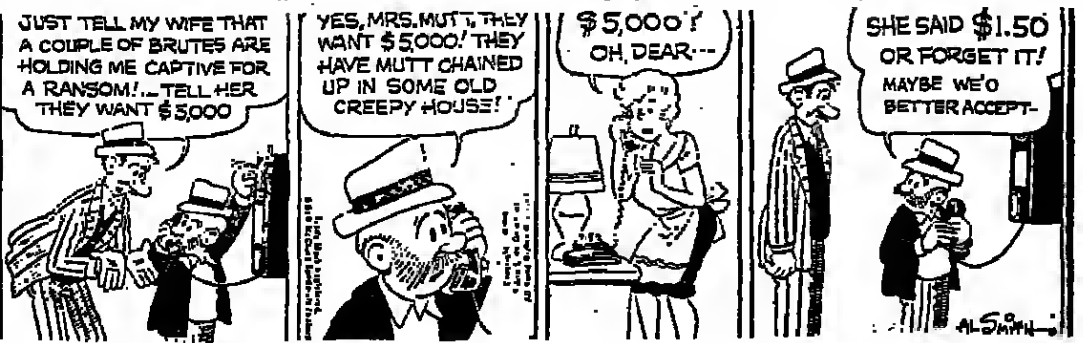
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1997

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES

(March 21 to April 19) You're under a lot of pressure. Everybody wants the job done now, and perfectly. There's a lot riding on this assignment. Your whole future could be in the balance. Show them you're made of the right stuff. You can perform brilliantly under adverse conditions. Knock 'em dead!

TAURUS

(April 20 to May 20) It looks like there's a project overdue. No problem. You're decisive, and you belong to a good team. The two you can figure it out. Everything you do is getting you closer to your goal. Don't take any work home with you tonight, either. Your saugle time is too important.

GEMINI

(May 21 to June 21) You've had a great time over the weekend, but you place is all messed up. The cosmic lesson you're learning involves keeping track of details. The more you do that, the more successful you'll be. It's much easier if your surroundings are kept neat. Tidy up, again.

MOON CHILDREN

(June 22 to July 21) A fabulous opportunity could appear. You may get the chance to take the information you gathered over the weekend and put it to good use. More important is your persistence. You won't take no for an answer. And why should you? You're right and you know it.

LEO

(July 22 to August 21) This is not an easy day for you. There's too much money going out and not enough work coming in. Your partner doesn't seem to understand. Do you have an athletic friend who lives far away? He or she can't solve your problem, but just talking about it will make you feel better.

VIRGO

(August 22 to September 22) You can discover a sure way to put more money into your account. It has to do with information you've been learning recently. You have to do the homework, though. Follow a hunch. Besides being smarter than usual, you have more energy, too. So get out there and use it.

LIBRA

(September 23 to October 22) There's too much to do and not enough money. Do you feel like you're being tested on this, or what? Don't worry about it. Once the tension's gone, you'll come up with lots of great ideas. Do the one thing you find most difficult. Relax.

SCORPIO

(October 23 to November 21) You're going to be incredible powerful later this week. Today's not bad. Everybody wants to please you. You'll be under more pressure tomorrow and Wednesday, but by Thursday you're back in control. Don't wait until then to act. Use the opportunity you have now.

SAGITTARIUS

(November 22 to December 21) A loved one is under pressure. You can help by providing comfort and advice. Also, pull a few strings behind the scenes. Do whatever needs to be done, in a responsible manner. You're not meddling; you're providing a service your friend can't.

CAPRICORN

(December 22 to January 20) You almost found something you've been seeking. You haven't looked far enough away. Let a friend know what you want. You keep trying to do everything all by yourself. When will you learn that you always do best when you're working with others?

AQUARIUS

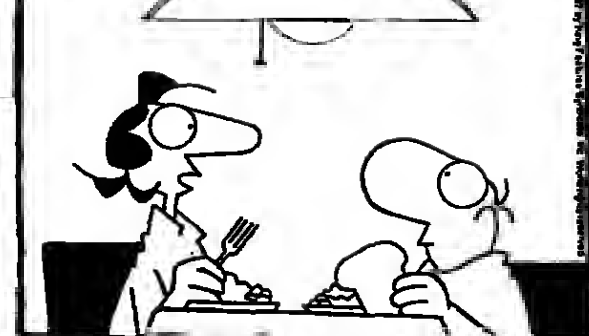
(January 21 to February 19) Try to ignore an older person's demands. You're going to have to do the job, but you don't have to do it all this minute. First, get organized. Get someone to help you. The obvious choice for that job will become apparent. Don't plan anything too complicated for later on tonight.

PISCES

(February 20 to March 20) An older person is being cantankerous again. If you didn't get so upset, you'd have a lot more fun. You always have control over your own attitude. You can't change what the other person says, but you sure can change how you react to it! Lighten up, and don't stay out late.

Birthstone of October: Opal — Tourmaline

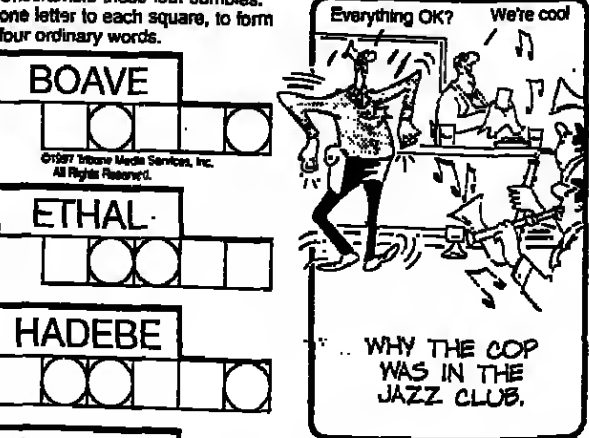
THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"If you put more love in your heart, that leaves less room for cholesterol."

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: HE

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: AMUSE CREEK REFUGE FASTEN Answer: Tough for a garbage man to do — REFUSE REFUSE

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Engineers association registers sharp decline in investments

**** THE INVESTMENTS** of the Jordan Engineers Association have plummeted by between 50 and 60 per cent, the association's financial documents show. The shares owned by the association's pension fund had a market value of JD3.6 million as of Oct. 15, 1997, 60 per cent below their cost value of JD9.9 million.

The investments in the Jordan Sulpho Chemicals, the Universal Chemical Industries and the Jordan Rockwool Industries were the hardest hit as they recorded JD650,000, JD1 million and JD570,000 of losses respectively. The pension fund had investments in the shares of 55 public shareholding companies but two of these firms had a zero shareholders equity and eight of them were not listed for trading at the Amman Financial Market.

Another sign of the sharp decline in the value of the investment was a stake involving 355,807 shares in one company, when purchased, the value of the share was, on the average, JD2.240 but currently, the market value stands at 650 fils a share. The financial records showed one profitable investment but that only involved 44,137 shares whose value increased from JD4.572 to JD4.800. However, the records showed that only seven companies, out of the 55 mentioned earlier, recorded profits whereas the remaining 48 firms posted lower results that, for some of them, went down by more than 80 per cent.

The association's insurance fund was hit by a 53 per cent decline, or JD1.5 million, in the value of its investments which fell from JD2.9 million when the shares were purchased to JD1.4 million at market value on Oct. 15.

The insurance fund had investments in 31 companies but a large stake was taken in the equity of the Jordan Spinning and Weaving Company and the Jordan Rockwool Industries Company. Of the 31 firms, two were not listed at the stock exchange and one company was liquidated when its shareholders equity was wiped out.

Only three companies achieved profits whereas the remaining 28 firms recorded losses.

Explaining the reasons for such investments and losses, the association president said investments were made according to principles of non-usury dealings.

Gulf states set to privatise power sector

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Gulf Arab states are set to embark on a major programme to privatise their electricity sectors to ease financial pressures caused by weak oil prices and heavy defence spending, experts said Saturday.

Oman has taken the lead in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), setting up the region's first privately-managed power project and announcing plans for more ventures.

Saudi Arabia, the world's dominant oil power, said this week its water and electricity sector would be among the government enterprises to be partly sold off to the public under economic reforms.

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Abu Dhabi government has decided to invite local and foreign investors to contribute to a giant hydro-electric project. Other states in the region are considering similar reforms.

"The GCC states are actively examining the privatisation option for a number of industries and infrastructure projects," said Achilles Adamantidis, director of engineering at the Washington-based Infrastructure Capital Group.

"The main motivation for

this development is to open opportunities for investment for local as well as for foreign capital and to reduce the obligation of the state budgets," he said in a paper to a conference here on "privatisation and deregulation in the Gulf energy sector."

Delegates attending the two-day conference, organised by the state-run Emirates Institute for Strategic Studies and Research, said GCC countries need to pump more than \$30 billion over the next eight years to expand their electricity sectors to meet a rapid growth in consumption.

"It will ensure future power supplies, upgrade the electricity sector and ease pressure on Gulf budgets. This will enable them to

save large funds, which could be channelled into other development projects in the region," said Mohammed Abdul Baqi, manager of the state-controlled Emirates Industrial Bank.

Opening the meeting, Sheikh Dhiyab bin Zayed Al-Nahayan, a member of the UAE royal family, said GCC states were giving priority to privatisation in reform programmes aimed at cushioning the impact of lower oil prices.

"In Abu Dhabi, the government intends to embark

on a large-scale programme to privatise its water and electricity sectors. Indeed, such a move is expected to have a positive impact on the emirate's development process," said the Sheikh, who heads a government committee entrusted with the privatisation of Al-Tawila hydro-electric plant near Abu Dhabi city.

Officials said this week French company Total and several other Western firms had been shortlisted for participating in the third phase of Al-Tawila venture, to be launched in 1998.

The first two stages of the project, one of the biggest water desalination ventures in the world, have already been completed.

They have a combined production capacity of around 100 million gallons (360 million litres) of drinking water per day and more than 2,000 megawatts of electricity.

The cost of the three phases had been estimated at more than \$3 billion in mid-1980s but industry sources said it had sharply increased.

"Privatisation of the third stage of Al-Tawila is just a beginning. More power and water facilities will be shared with the private sector in the near future," an Abu Dhabi official said.

Saudi firm gets \$300m loan for Japanese oil tankers

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The biggest shipping firm in Saudi Arabia Sunday signed an agreement to borrow \$300 million from the U.S. Chase Manhattan Bank to refinance the purchase of five super-tankers from Japan.

The National Shipping Company of Saudi Arabia (NSCSA), the second biggest petrochemical transporter in the world, said its chairman, Saleh Al-Naim, signed the loan agreement with the bank at the firm's Riyadh headquarters.

The loan will be used to refinance the remaining value of the five very large crude carriers (VLCCs) which were built by Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and delivered over the past two years.

In a statement sent to AFP, NSCSA said it selected Chase Manhattan after it offered better lending terms than other international financial institutions, including the Japanese Import-Export Bank.

It said total loans for the tankers deal had reached \$435 million and creditors also included the Arab Banking Corporation, the Arab Petroleum Investment Corporation, the Saudi American Bank, Paribas, the Royal Bank of Scotland, and other Western and Japanese banks.

NSCSA officials earlier put the total value of the five vessels at around \$480 million and said they would be partly financed through the company's resources.

The ships, with a capacity of 2.1 million barrels each, allowed NSCSA to transport crude for the first time.

The Saudi government controls 29 per cent of NSCSA's capital of two billion riyals (\$333 million) while the rest is held by local investors.

The company, which operates more than 40 vessels, has launched plans to expand its services mainly in the Gulf and Asia.

research at Sahar Securities, said the surge of sell orders was in response to the drop in share prices worldwide last week and in particular to the fall in technology shares on Wall Street Friday.

Most Israeli high-tech stocks are traded in New York but many are held by TASE-traded companies.

"There's very little green on the board," said Avi Fischer, executive director for institutional sales at Zanex Securities. "Overall we're looking at a three to six per cent downward indication."

In the Meretz session, sell orders prior to the opening bell reached a huge 174 million shekels against virtually no buy orders, Tsur said.

"It's falling sharply, more sharply than I expected," he said.

Tsur said early trading orders for arbitrage stocks like Koor Industries koor.ta, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries tevi001.ta, Supersol Ltd susi01.ta, ssa.n and Nice nica.ta niccy.o pointed to declines of three to five per cent.

But he stressed that the decline was market-wide and not limited to top arbitrage shares.

Fischer said he believed the market remained fundamentally strong, but expected that at best it would remain nervous for the first part of the week.

"Wall Street will be trading jittery in the first half of the week... so we're going to see some choppy trading here," he said, adding that bargain-hunters may begin coming into the market as early as Monday.

The Bank of Israel is widely expected to cut interest rates Monday by about 0.3 percentage point from the current 13.4 per cent. The announcement will come at 1430 GMT Monday after trading is over.

REUTERS The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 26/10/97 18:22									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF	ESP	YEN
US Dollar	1.7744	0.6120	1.4638	1.2250	1.3896	1731.34	1.9990	5.9429	
DE Mark	0.5636	1.0000	0.3447	0.8250	0.7830	875.57	1.1267	3.3368	
GB Sterling	1.6340	2.9038	1.0000	2.3967	199.61	2.2706	2829.01	3.2684	9.7107
CHF Franc	0.8932	1.2114	0.4177	1.0000	83.46	0.9487	1181.86	126.42	4.0571
JP Yen	0.0082	1.4509	0.5003	1.1969	1.0000	1.1362	14.16	163.45	4.8593
Ch.Dollar	0.7186	1.2761	0.4386	1.0522	1.14	1.2453	1.4375	4.2736	
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0243	0.3532	0.8848	1418.64	0.8022	11.54	3.4306	
FR Franc	0.3003	0.8972	0.3058	0.7322	81.08	0.6948	865.67	2.8718	
ESP Ptas	0.1683	0.2982	0.1028	0.2460	20.53	0.2335	33.59	33.9900	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF	ESP	YEN
US Dollar	0.7090	3.7505	0.3770	3.6405	0.3043	3.6726	1535.00	3.3875	
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	5.2988	0.3377	5.1347	0.4282	5.1800	2185.02	4.7778	
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1890	0.1005	0.97	0.0811	0.98	409.28	0.9032	
Bahraini Dinar	2.65	1.8607	0.9485	9.86	0.8071	9.74	407.73	3.3588	
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	0.1032	1.0302	0.0836	1.01	421.65	0.9305	
Kuwait Dinar	3.2864	2.3301	1.2325	1.2390	11.96	12.07	5044.70	0.9305	
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1931	0.1021	1.0226	0.0829	1.01	417.06	0.9224	
Libyan Dinar	0.85	0.4619	0.2433	0.2456	2.3717	0.1982	2.3926	2.2088	
Egyptian	0.2952	0.2093	0.1072	0.1113	1.0747	0.0896	1.0842	453.14	

Energy									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF	ESP	YEN
Brent	19.48	19.92							
WTI	20.06	21.15							
Bonny	19.48	19.92							
Dubai	19.10	19.30							
UL Gas	201.00	202.00							

JOD Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF	ESP	YEN
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.1545	1.1803							
DE Mark	0.3984	0.4004							
CHF Franc	0.4832	0.4856							
JP Yen	0.119	0.1198							
FR Franc	0.5785	0.5814							
NL Guilder	0.3537	0.3555							
IT Lira	0.4084	0.4104							

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF	ESP	YEN
USD	5.53	5.68	5.75	5.87	5.95				
GBP	7.00	7.34	7.40	7.46	7.53				
JPY	0.42	0.37	0.40	0.38	0.56				
DEM	3.48	3.70	3.82	3.75	4.14				
FRF	3.48	3.57	3.72	3.88	4.05				
CHF	1.82	2.05	2.12	2.06	2.28				
ITL	6.65	6.51	6.19	5.91	5.74				

Main Equity Indices									
Index	Value	Change	Value	Change	Value	Change	Value	Change	Value
New York	DOW JONES	7715.41	-132.36	-1.69	7938.61	7695.51	7647.77		
New York	S&P 500	941.84	-20.05	-2.13	960.04	937.25	930.29		
London	FT-SE 100	4970.2	-21.3	-0.43	5103.2	4960.2	4951.5		
Tokyo	Nikkei 225	17363.74	-212.19	-1.24	17494.3	16883.5	17581.6		
Paris	CAC 40	2848.03	-7.84	-0.27	2900.51	2834.91	2858.87		
Frankfurt	DAX	4050.87	-73.81	-1.83	4085.85	4043.28	3977.26		

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET										
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHIBELI AMN										
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179										
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 26/10/1997										
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	COMPANY'S NAME	F / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
346,000	245,000	ARAB BANK	15.2	1.21	11	480	158400	330.50	330.00	-50
N	1,680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	2	0.00	10	11942	21866	1.84	1.83	-01
3,600	2,760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.2	0.00	3	1415	4174	2.95	2.95	-
2,600	2,150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	9.9	6.30	19	31000	77551	2.50	2.51	+01
4,600	4,180	THE BOUSING BK.	15.1	3.83	7	11207	56701	5.06	5.06	-
4,180	2,440	JOR. KUWAIT BANK	11.7	0.00	19	12775	42194	3.15	3.29	+14
1,050	740	JOR. GULF BANK	4.5	9.21	2	1100	836	7.76	7.76	-
4,050	3,430	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	14.5	3.36	21	4708	16745	3.55	3.57	+02
2,900	3,080	JOR. INT. FIN. BANK	24.6	0.00	1	2600	3630	3.83	3.83	-
1,900	880	REIT. AL-MAL (REITRA)	6	16.48	6	1550	1416	.91	.91	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 237.11 %CHG: -0.04										
2,020	1,590	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.3	7.98	2	3600	6768	1.88	1.88	-
2,200	1,820	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	8.4	4.65	4	30950	64608	2.09	2.15	+06
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 115.58 %CHG: +0.29										
2,050	1,550	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.0	5.35	7	7555	14127	1.87	1.87	-
8,160	820	REAL ESTATE INV.	12.8	6.52	4	988	907	.92	.92	-
8,160	6,700	ALRA-1	14.9	6.02	15	893	7305	8.04	8.30	+26
3,900	2,690	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.7	0.00	4	3000	1117	3.78	3.73	-05
1,140	900	LARKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	2	4300	4207	.93	.93	-
2,230	1,630	UNIFIED CO.	8.2	6.36	2	650	1121	1.73	1.73	-
950	640	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	4	4000	3000	.75	.75	-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 111.86 %CHG: +0.01										
1,050	930	ATTACHEES	9	0.00	6	1390	1388	1.00	1.00	-
4,450	3,030	JOR. CHEMIST FACT.	21.5	3.44	29	12820	40580	3.25	3.20	-05
7,050	5,550	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.2	3.28	3	1450	8845	6.10	6.10	-
11,160	9,070	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.5	0.00	13	1069	11645	11.02	10.84	-18
1,410	1,050	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	9.1	9.52	1	250	263	1.06	1.05	-01
3,260	1,360	INDUSTRIAL COMM. AGR.	9	0.00	5	500	679	1.36	1.35	-01
7,150	5,800	JOR. HOUSING MKTS	10.7	3.01	2	300	3325	6.60	6.65	+05
6,000	3,040	ARAB PHARM. MARF.	11.7	4.71	22	5078	21549	4.27	4.25	-02
1,750	1,100	JOR. PIPES MARCT.	12.9	7.69	12	2450	2595	1.10	1.04	-06
1,480	950	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	14.0	0.00	21	4900	6405	1.29	1.32	+03
6,000	4,300	DAR ALADMA DV. INV.	14.0	4.39	13	2792	15913	5.78	5.70	-08
3,850	2,220	ARAB ALUM. IND.	5.7	10.20	2	3400	8330	2.49	2.45	-04
4,690	450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.7	0.00	19	1100	8321	.98	.98	-
1,430	820	ARAB PAPER CON. TRD.	26.3	0.00	5	1100	946	.88	.86	-02
1,330	760	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	1	2000	148	.76	.74	-02
770	510	NATIONAL INDUS.	9	0.00	2	1400	812	.58	.58	-
1,200	810	EXPRESS PAPER & CHEM.	9	0.00	4	1500	64	.64	.64	-
2,970	1,420	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	12.9	6.99	3	118	164	1.43	1.43	-
890	530	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	9	0.00	14	6000	3838	.65	.63	-02
1,670	1,120	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	16.6	5.38	5	750	978	1.31	1.30	-01
610	400	KAWAR IND.	60.0	0.00	1	600	1	.00	.00	-
1,880	1,080	UNIV. MOON INDUS.	9	.21	4	700	868	1.24	1.23	-01
1,460	870	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	11.8	11.16	10	3750	2821	.88	.68	-
1,300	620	ALRA-2 CHEMIST	14.4	1.44	1	100	53	1.13	1.13	-
1,070	810	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.9	0.00	15	12750	11093	.88	.87	-01
2,090	1,340	KL -RAY REPLY REAR	5.0	0.00	6	1745	2556	1.44	1.45	+01
1,330	1,080	LYEL TOBACCO	6.7	6.72	22	4400	5850	1.23	1.22	-01
810	710	JORDAN STAL	34.4	6.58	4	7100	5396	.76	.76	-
840	580	MDO EAST COMPLEX	7.5	16.39	26	39100	23319	.60	.61	+01
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 116.01 %CHG: -0.47										
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 170.96 %CHG: -0.19										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 26/10/1997										
610	380	JOR. TRADE PAC.	10.4	0.00	12	18000	7020	.39	.39	-
1,650	1,060	ZARA FOR INVESTMENT	80.0	0.00	4	1600	1915	1.20	1.22	+02
800	680	UNION INV. 50%	9	0.00	14	36000	9720	.77	.77	-
570	360	ARAB FIR. INVEST.	9	0.00	12	46300	18520	.40	.40	-
N	1,180	UNION INV. FOR FIRM. INV	58.0	0.00	2	20000	22600	1.13	1.13	-
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750	460	REDA-2 INDUST. FINANCIO	13.0	0.00	13	15125	540	.60	.60	-
520	460	ARAB ELECT. INDUS.	9	0.00	2	7268	3343	.46	.46	-
660	580	MIDWEST PHARM. 75%	9	0.00	13	42930	16621	.66	.65	-01
1,400	860	UNION TOBACCO 75%	9	0.00	4	3079	3165	1.26	1.28	+02
280	280	ALRA-2 IND.	9	0.00	1	250	80	.80	.80	-
N	1,000	MDO ALUMINIUM 75%	94.6	0.00	1	500	215	.68	.68	-
N	1,020	ARAB INT. FOOD PAC.	39.5	0.00	1	100	82	.78	.82	+04
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Villeneuve takes title in dramatic final race

JEREZ, Spain (AFP) — Jacques Villeneuve won the world driver's championship after champion Michael Schumacher crashed out in a dramatic European Grand Prix here on Sunday.

The 26-year-old finished third, behind race winner Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard but it was enough to give him the title.

Schumacher, who had begun the race one point ahead of Villeneuve and favourite to win his third driver's title, spun out in the 48th lap when he tried to block the Canadian from overtaking him.

The German appeared to try and drive Villeneuve off the track when he squeezed past but the Williams driver managed to keep his car under control while the Ferrari slid off into the gravel and out of the race.

The incident brought back memories of 1994 when Schumacher took the title by one point after colliding with Damon Hill, knocking the Englishman out of the race.

"I was not surprised that Michael tried to close the door. I new I was taking a risk trying to overtake him but I had no choice," said Villeneuve.

"I was really worried when he hit me. I thought the car was broken. It did



Canadian Jacques Villeneuve jokes on the podium after coming third in the European Formula One Grand Prix in Jerez, October 26. Villeneuve is the new world champion after German Michael Schumacher had to abandon the race following a collision between the two championship contenders (Reuters photo)

not handle the same for the rest of the race," he added. As Villeneuve drove off into the distance a furious Schumacher stormed back

to the pits with his face like thunder and stormed into the Ferrari motorhome and locked himself away. Villeneuve looked as if he

would not only take the title but the race but Hakkinen, looking for his first ever formula one win in 97 attempts had other ideas.

With less than a lap to go Hakkinen, and then Coulthard, swept past Villeneuve who had no intention of getting into a scrap and spoil his world championship dreams.

"I saw Mika and David closing rapidly and I did not try to fight them off. I was taking no chances," explained Villeneuve, delighted to have taken his first championship title.

"It feels great," said an emotional Villeneuve.

"It's been an up and down year. We had the most competitive car from the middle of the season but there have been times when we did not get the job done.

"I made a few mistakes, the team made some mistakes. To win today after the disqualification in Suzuka feels great."

Gerhard Berger, in his final Grand Prix, went past Eddie Irvine's Ferrari just before the line to finish fourth.

Heinz-Harald Frentzen in the second Williams was sixth.

Villeneuve's title gave Williams their second successive clean sweep. Two weeks ago they clinched the constructors title.

Von Gruningen starts on right note

TIGNES (AFP) —

Michael von Gruningen of Switzerland got the perfect start in his bid to win a third straight World Cup title when he won the World Cup giant slalom here on Sunday in a time of 2 minutes 24.29 seconds.

Von Gruningen's compatriot Steve Locher was second in 2:24.86 and Austrian Hermann Maier, one of 10 Austrians who qualified for the second run, third in 2:25.26.

The 28-year-old Von Gruningen, who was recording his 12th win in World Cup giant slaloms, was second fastest after the first run but when the fastest man Austrian Hans Knauss made a mistake going through the under-gate on the bottom half of the course, victory was assured for the Swiss skier.

Locher, who had won the first race last year, put up a good performance to take the runners-up spot having missed a lot of pre-season training because of injury. Maier had displaced his compatriot and dual 1991 World champion Stefan Eberharter, who had lost so much of his form that he had competed in the second tier competition the European Cup last year.

South Korea claim World Cup spot

TOKYO (AFP) — South Korea claimed their fourth successive spot in the World Cup finals on Sunday after Japan and United Arab Emirates drew their Asian qualifier 1-1 in Tokyo.

The result meant neither could overtake the Koreans at the top of Asian Group B. Hassan Subail Thabet Mubarak's diving header cancelled out Wagner Lopes's fourth minute goal and left Japan facing a mountainous task to get the all-important second place in the group.

Japan took the lead when Kazuyoshi Miura fed the ball through to the Brazilian-born Lopes whose angled shot from outside the area hit a post and went in. The Emirates stunned the sell-out crowd in the Tokyo National Stadium with an equaliser in the 36th minute.

South Korea lead the five nation group with 16 points from six matches. UAE are second with eight points and Japan, who will co-host the 2002 finals with the Koreans, third with seven points.

Kazakhstan have six points and Uzbekistan five. The top team from Asia's two groups qualify automatically for the finals in France next year. The two second placed sides battle for a third spot in a playoff.



Brazilian-born Wagner Lopes (R) of Japan celebrates his goal with striker Kazuyoshi Miura (L) and Tsuyoshi Kitazawa (13) after scoring to lead 1-0 against UAE during the first half of the World Cup soccer qualifying Asia Group B final round at Tokyo's national stadium (Reuters photo)

The loser of that match will play off against Oceania get a second chance in a winners Australia.

7-goal United power back to Premiership summit

LONDON (AFP) — Reigning champions Manchester United stormed back to the top of the English Premiership table after crushing Barnsley 7-0 with a display of irresistible power and style on Saturday.

With former leaders Arsenal not playing Aston Villa until Sunday, United seized the chance to return to the summit with a ruthlessness which left their fans in raptures, their opponents in a state of shock and their title rivals in a state of anxiety.

Andy Cole spearheaded the onslaught with a first half hat-trick and there were also two goals from Ryan Giggs and one apiece from Paul Scholes and Karel Poborsky. United Manager Alex

Ferguson was understandably delighted with the outcome, beaming: "You only get performances like that maybe once or twice in a season."

"I don't think anybody would have got away with it today. We were just totally on-song."

"The players all had faith in their ability today, they took the ball well and passed with great accuracy and penetration."

"I felt our goals were so well taken that apart from maybe the first one, when their defence hesitated, they were not really the fault of any of their players."

In a match full of outstanding performances, Ferguson picked out Giggs as his man

of the match.

"I thought he was superb. If Ryan has a run of games, and touch wood, he stays away from injury and gets some momentum going, he will be an unbelievable asset for us," he said.

Liverpool Manager Roy Evans, meanwhile, claimed his under-fire Liverpool stars regained some pride with a 4-0 demolition of high-flying Derby.

Two goals from Robbie Fowler and one apiece from Steve McManaman and Oyvind Leonhardsen went some way to make up for their defeats against Strasbourg and Everton.

Evans said: "We asked for commitment. That doesn't mean steaming in and kick-

ing people, it means a quality and consistency of performance."

"When people start questioning your passion and pride, it digs deep and hurts me and the players."

Newcastle manager Kenny Dalglish was a happy man following his side's 1-1 draw with third-placed Blackburn Rovers.

Under-fire Spurs Manager Gerry Francis accused his side of being "unprofessional" after they slumped to a 3-2 defeat at Southampton.

The knives were out yet again for Sheffield Wednesday Boss David Pleat following his side's seventh Premiership defeat of the season, 3-1 at home to Crystal Palace, which has

left them just one point off the foot of the table.

The Wednesday fans again vented their anger and frustration at the Wednesday boss with cries of "Pleat out."

Pleat, though, is refusing to panic and said: "I am very calm. I am not hyper any more. Obviously, it's a natural frustration from the fans that they take their feelings out on the manager."

In the day's other matches, Neil Ardley's 29th minute penalty gave Wimbledon a 1-0 victory over Leeds at Selhurst Park while Everton exorcised the memory of their 4-1 League Cup humiliation by holding Coventry to a goalless draw at Highfield Road.

PETR KORDA from the Czech Republic celebrates his victory against Richard Krajcek from the Netherlands at the final of the ATP Indoor Championships in Stuttgart. Korda defeated Krajcek 7-6 6-2 6-4 (Reuters photo)



PSG bounce back after 2-0 win

PARIS (AFP) — Paris St Germain bounced back after their midweek European Champions' League humiliation when they crashed 5-1 away to Bayern Munich, by beating Lens 2-0 Saturday to open up a four point lead on top of the French first division standings.

The 1996 European Cup Winners Cup champions, lead Metz, who suffered their third defeat in a week when they were beaten 1-0 at home by

Montpellier and Bordeaux. Bordeaux could reduce the gap to a single point if they beat Nantes on Sunday.

PSG fielded their experienced midfielder Vincent Guerin for the first time since he announced his appeal after testing positive for the prohibited substance of nandrolone, and they snapped up the three points thanks to a Bruno N'Gotty freekick and a stunning backheel by Brazilian playmaker Rai.

Metz, who lost their early championship lead when they were beaten by Marseille last weekend were hoping to stem the slump which continued in midweek when they lost to Karlsruhe in the home leg of their UEFA Cup tie. But their second home defeat in four days was completed when Cameroon international Marcel Mahouvé netted late in the second-half.

Rennes climbed out of the bottom three when they recorded their first

win in over a month with a 3-1 home triumph over Strasbourg who had Pascal Nouma sent off for the second time this season.

France's other UEFA Cup heroes Lyon, who beat Inter Milan 2-1 away, also failed to win their league match. They drew 0-0 with Toulouse — leaving them with only four points from a possible 21 in home matches this season.

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Borussia Dortmund's midfielder Andreas Moeller (C) scores during a German league's soccer match against Rostock in Dortmund, October 25. Beside him is Rostock's Radwan Yasser (L), his teammate Joerg Heinrich is watching. Dortmund won the match 3-2 (Reuters photo)

Eighth time lucky for Dortmund

BONN (AFP) — Borussia Dortmund eased the pressure on Italian coach Nevio Scala on Saturday as they recorded their first win in eight Bundesliga matches beating Hansa Rostock 3-2.

Hertha Berlin also saved coach Juergen Roeder from certain dismissal with a 3-1 over Karlsruhe in their Olympic stadium.

Kaiserslautern preserved their four point lead at the head of the table through their 1-0 over Duisburg on Friday evening.

It was all smiles for Scala though after two of his German international veterans Jurgen Kohler and Andy Moller, the latter with a double, had scored the goals to bring Dortmund's dreadful run to an end.

"I'm very happy," Scala smiled.

Dortmund attacked immediately and were rewarded in the third minute when Kohler netted following a Swiss international Stephane Chapuisat's pass.

After Jens Dowe's equaliser five minutes later, Oliver Neuville hit the crossbar — a painful miss for the Rostock striker whose wife was giving birth at that moment.

Moller took the game by the scruff of the neck, though, with goals either side of half time, including a sensational solo run to give Dortmund a two goal cushion after 53 minutes.

"When Andy Moller has a full steam up and runs at the opposition like that then he can use his skill and speed to score the way he did," Rostock coach Ewald

Lienen summarised.

"It really was a wonderful goal. But we were playing the European champions and you can't hack out a player like Moller for the whole 90 minutes," he added.

Dortmund then sat back playing a purely defensive game as they sought to hold on to the three points.

Hansa striker Steffen Baumgart sneaked through however with an 88th minute goal but by then Borussia had the game in the bag and could finally celebrate three points.

Karlsruhe left behind the form which took them to a 2-0 victory over French side FC Metz in the UEFA Cup on Tuesday and fell 3-1 to Hertha Berlin.

The result, only Hertha's second win this season, was not enough to lift them from the bottom of the Bundesliga table but it did postpone the threatened dismissal of Roeder.

Roeder, who led Hertha back into Germany's top division this season, was placed on probation on Thursday when members of the club's management refused to appear with him at the usual pre-match press conference.

"It was enormously important that we got the three points," a tight-lipped Roeder commented.

"The team worked hard. Everything else is decided by other people. But we want to keep working in peace and as you saw today the team impressively confirmed that," he added.

With an 'us' versus 'them' scenario burgeoning between the Berlin team

and the board room, Saturday's Karlsruhe result has merely staved off Roeder's expected sacking for at least another week. Another man breathing deeply is Borussia's Monchengladbach's coach Hannes Bongartz whose long term future is also not certain.

His team fought back through a Patrik Andersson goal in the 89th minute to salvage a 2-2 draw, after Bayer Leverkusen's Markus Feldhoff gave the visitors the lead in the 78th minute.

Danish striker Per Pedersen, who was loaned from English Premiership side Blackburn Rovers mid-week for 350,000 marks, failed to score in his Bundesliga debut.

Bayern Munich remain hot on the heels of Kaiserslautern and claimed another win on Saturday, 2-0 over Werder Bremen.

Arminia Bielefeld lost their sixth consecutive match away from home, 2-0 in Wolfsburg, Schalke 04 moved up to third with a 2-0 win over VfL Bochum.

2000 Games triathlon course gets IOC approval

SYDNEY (AFP) — The course for the triathlon which makes its Olympic Games debut here in 2000 got the thumbs up from an International Olympic Committee (IOC) official Sunday.

The scenic course in and around Sydney's famous harbour and Opera House was the setting for International Triathlon Union (ITU) World Cup races for men and women and it was not only the competitors that were under scrutiny.

The course begins with a 1,500-metre swim in Farm Cove next to the photogenic Opera House, a 40km hike leg lapping a route from the Opera House around the harbour foreshores followed by a 10km run through the city's streets and the Botanic Gardens.

Triathlon makes its Olympic debut at the 2000 Games, where it may be the first event staged, and it received a boost with a glowing commendation Sunday amid halmy spring conditions and strong competition.

"The course is fantastic. Today I believe that if things are going right, it should remain," said IOC official Gilbert Felli.

"It was good because we were able to go around on foot and see so much of the course."

"It is a very attractive, new and modern sport and we can see that's very balanced with the same level of gender watching the sport."

"It is something which will fit in very well with the Olympic agenda."

Kingdom's delegation to S. West Asian Games still undecided

Jordan invited to join Mediterranean Games

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — With less than a month remaining for the Nov. 17-28 South-west Asian Games which will be held in Tehran, Iran, the Kingdom's delegation is far from being finalised with participating federations still not having named their players as the countdown begins for the first such ever games.

In a telephone interview with the Jordan Times prior to his departure to Bangkok, Thailand, for the meetings of the Sports Committee of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) Vice-Chairman Mouaffaq Fawwaz said he hoped the delegation would be named by Nov. 1 at the maximum.

"The delegation will most likely comprise of 40-45 athletes, trainers and officials. It will not be a big one," he said.

Fawwaz added that Jordan would most likely participate in athletics, boxing, fencing, gymnastics, shooting, badminton, tennis and cycling. Wrestling, equestrian and handball federations had earlier applied to take part but seem to have declined at the moment.

It was not clear how many countries would be taking part in the first ever West Asian Games — open to men's teams only — although the Iranian Olympic Committee has offered to cover accommodation leaving only air-fare to be paid by the respective participating countries.

Despite that, many of the Kingdom's cash-strapped federations have shied away, with their budgets unable to cover the needed expenses.

With their budgets stretched to the limit and the season nearing its end, most federations have not yet paid their 40 per cent in expenses incurred at the Pan-Arab Games. The JOC itself was JD50,000 short of covering the over JD100,000 cost.

Dr. Fawwaz explained that the JOC decided to sponsor medal-winning athletes at July's Pan-Arab Games, while the rest of the federations would cover their own expenses.

Four of the country's most successful sports federations — basketball, table tennis, boxing and fencing — had earlier declined participation, however, the latter two will now take part after the JOC decided to cover the expenses for medal winning athletes.

Jordan finished fifth among the 19 participating countries gaining more gold medals in Beirut than in the past seven Pan-Arab Games altogether, and capping the best Jordanian participation to date since the event was first held in 1953.

The Kingdom took a total of 40 medals, including 10 gold, 8 silver and 22 bronze medals, in the two-week-long event.

Onlookers have criticised the JOC for asking the over-burdened federations to cover expenses when their annual budgets do not correspond to their expenses — a fact that leads many excellent federations to miss participation.

However, the JOC's decision to sponsor excellent athletes paved the way to include athletes in top form to the Kingdom's delegation.

Four of the federations participating in the Tehran Games were impressive in Beirut.

The boxers won five medals, fencing also earned a bronze medal, athletics earned five medals and weightlifting also took five medals.

Some of the declining federations had either impressive results at the Pan-Arab Games or are considered to have good teams that should be best prepared for the 9th Pan-Arab Games in 2001 which will be held in Jordan.

Table tennis took two bronze medals in both the doubles and the team event. Jordan's wrestlers were also impressive in Beirut taking four medals.

While basketball failed to earn a medal, Jordan has regrouped a new line-up of young stars who finished 6th in Lebanon and 7th in the recently-concluded Asian Championship. Jordan was Arab Champion in the 1985 Pan-Arab Games.

Some of the federations that have

recently declined include shooting in which Jordan was eliminated from the top six qualifying positions; equestrian team who also failed in the Grand Prix and finished at a disappointing 7th place among 8 competing teams in the team event; handball did not take part.

Gymnastics, badminton, cycling and tennis did not take part in Beirut and their competitive form is relatively unknown.

Jordan might join Med-Games

Meanwhile, Fawwaz said that the JOC was awaiting the approval to join the Mediterranean Games.

He said Med-Games and International Olympic Committee member Bashir Trabulsi had contacted the JOC urging Jordan to join in order to have more Arab countries taking part in the event.

Among countries hoping to join, Andorra and Portugal have already applied.

"Jordan is more likely to be accepted because of its geographic proximity to the Mediterranean region. I think it is a good step to join the event as it would provide us a valuable chance to compete alongside European nations and benefit from their competitive form," Fawwaz added.

The JOC vice-chairman who left Amman Monday to the OCA meetings in Bangkok said he would join other Asian Olympic officials to inspect Bangkok's preparation to host the Asian Games next year.

"They have formed many committees for the Games. Their experience and any new concepts will help us when we start preparations for hosting the Pan-Arab Games in Amman in 2001," he said.

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January had not been a good month for Trump Coup Tommy, the widower of the pastboards who rose from the ranks of the undistinguished only when trumps broke badly. Then Tommy became a master of technique.

Tommy was not one to let partner declare the hand if it could be avoided, hence his lean to six spades rather than six no trump. At the latter contract, collecting 13 tricks would have been simply a matter of cashing winners. The whole auction was rather typical of the hurly-burly world of cut-in bridge at the club.

West led a diamond, taken in dummy. The normal way to play trumps would be to cash the king and ace, assuring the small slam on all 3 splits, any 4-2 break if either the ten or queen of trumps appears, and even some 5-1 splits. That would have failed as the cards lay.

Tommy's approach was to cash the king of spades, then lead a low trump to his nine! When West showed out, the contract became easy for Tommy's peculiar skills. Declarer cashed the king and ace of hearts, then ruffed a heart. After cashing the king and jack of clubs, declarer started running high diamonds. East was forced to ruff the fourth round of the suit, then lead a trump away from Q 10 into Tommy's A J tenace.

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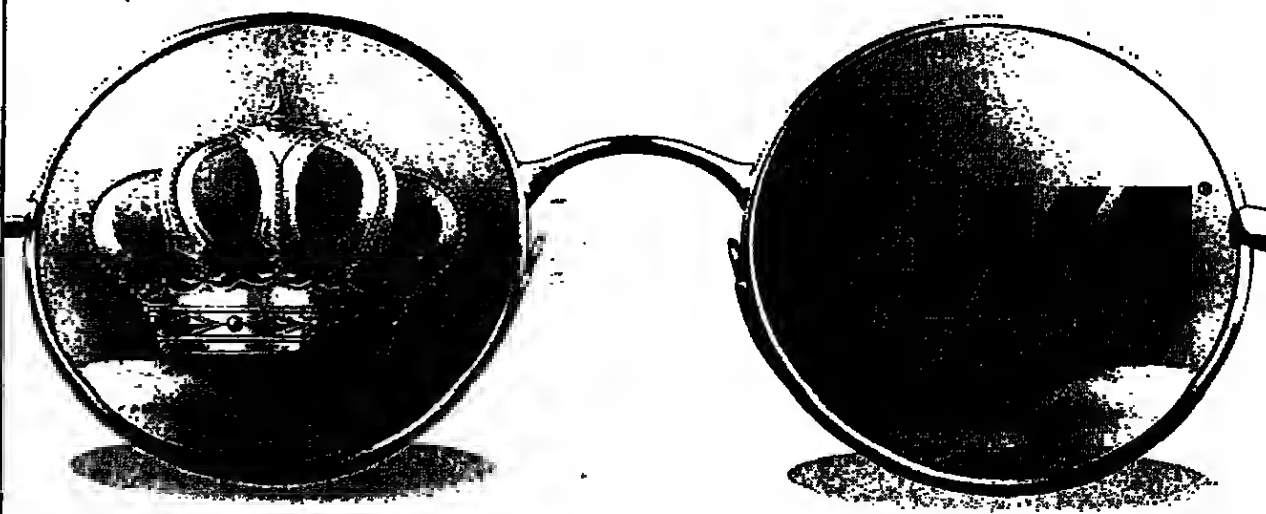
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Peace impasse undermines U.S. leadership in region — Pelletreau

DOHA (R) — A former Clinton administration official turned critic of U.S. policy on the Middle East said on Saturday the stalemate in the Arab-Israeli peace process was undermining U.S. leadership in the region.

"The longer the negotiating impasse continues, the greater the likelihood of slipping back into violence and confrontation, with accompanying new threats of terrorism and renewed efforts by some to acquire chemical, biological and even nuclear weapons," Robert Pelletreau said.

Mr. Pelletreau, former assistant secretary of state, said it would mean a new lease of life for military dictatorship, propaganda exploitation and fanaticism in the Arab World. "The United States, indeed all friends of peace, must not allow that to happen," he told Arab and Western government officials, academics and experts at a conference on Gulf security sponsored by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Mr. Pelletreau said dialogue between the United States and Iran, which he advocates, was only a question of time.

Dialogue would not compromise U.S. objectives and could be accomplished within Washington's existing policy of trying to isolate the Islamic republic, he said.

"Iran and the U.S. should be talking about their differences. A full agenda dialogue between the two governments covering any subject either side wishes to raise could reduce the current level of misunderstanding and tension and have at least as much

chance as the present policy of securing the change in Iranian policies that the U.S. seeks to achieve.

"Such a dialogue would not compromise U.S. objectives and could be accomplished within the existing policy of containment."

The Clinton administration pursues a policy of "dual containment" to isolate Iran and neighbouring Iraq.

It aims to keep Iraqi President Saddam Hussein militarily restrained to a controlled band of territory bounded north and south by "no-fly zones."

At the same time, it seeks to force Iran to rethink its opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace process, stop supporting "terrorism" and halt its arms build-up and attempts to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

"I believe that if President (Mohammad) Khatami remains true to propositions laid out last August in his inaugural address to the Majlis (parliament), such a dialogue is only a question of time," Mr. Pelletreau said.

Mr. Pelletreau, a former American ambassador to Egypt who left the administration a few months ago to join a Washington law firm, said it was absolutely vital that the U.S. and Gulf governments communicated regularly and fully about developments with respect to Iran.

The six states on the Arab side of the Gulf — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman — have expressed concern at Iran's recent arms build-up and Mr. Pelletreau said this seemed to guarantee a robust U.S. mili-

Clinton has time to meet Peres, Leah Rabin, but not Netanyahu

TEL AVIV (AP) — U.S. President Clinton will meet with Shimon Peres and Leah Rabin next month, although he reportedly can't find time to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

An aide to Ms. Rabin, widow of assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, confirmed Sunday that she and former Prime Minister Peres will present Clinton with an award from their peace foundation on Nov. 21.

Israeli news reports say Mr. Netanyahu is trying to arrange a meeting with President Clinton during his mid-November visit to the U.S. to speak to a gathering of American-Jewish leaders in Indianapolis, but that the U.S. president has so far said he is too busy.

An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed Sunday that U.S. officials did not appear to be making a maximum effort to arrange a meeting between

the two leaders.

Israeli news reports said President Clinton would only agree to meet with Mr. Netanyahu if there was progress in the peace talks with the Palestinians.

The Yediot Achronot newspaper quoted an unnamed Israeli diplomat who said it would be a "slap in the face" if President Clinton refused to meet with Mr. Netanyahu but met with Mr. Peres and Ms. Rabin, his political rivals.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry denied that the American president was refusing to meet Mr. Netanyahu. "The prime minister of Israel would never be told that he is not welcome in the United States or at the White House," Mr. McCurry said at a briefing Friday.

Spokesman McCurry said no meeting between President Clinton and Mr. Netanyahu had been scheduled because the Israeli prime minister's schedule was not yet set.

freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz — seems to me to guarantee a robust presence of the U.S. Navy indefinitely."

"Much as we would all like to see a cooperative and non-threatening Iran becoming part of a collective security structure, Iran's recent military procurements have not been reassuring," he said.

"Acquiring huge stocks of mines, surface to sea missiles, naval patrol craft and submarines — just the sort of weapons that could threaten

freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz — seems to me to guarantee a robust presence of the U.S. Navy indefinitely."

The U.S. Navy now has about 15 warships in the Gulf, including a carrier battle group that was ordered to hasten to the strategic waterway earlier this month following Iranian air raids on an armed opposition group's bases in Iraq.

U.S. says U.N. resolution 'clear setback for Iraq'

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.N. Security Council dealt Iraq "a clear setback" in threatening new sanctions unless it cooperates with U.N. weapons inspectors, the U.S. State Department said.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is on notice that the Security Council intends further action if he continues to challenge its long-standing demands that he disclose information about banned weapons, State Department spokesman Lee McClelleny said.

Mr. McClelleny expressed regret that France, Russia, China, Egypt, and Kenya abstained on the resolution, which was approved Thursday night.

Despite the disunity, the resolution should make clear to Iraq the only way to end its isolation is to destroy banned weapons, the chief U.N. arms inspector said in New York on Friday. Destruction of banned weapons is the council's main condition for lifting economic sanctions imposed on Baghdad in 1990 after President Saddam invaded Kuwait.

The chief weapons inspector, Richard Butler, said the Iraqis would be mistaken if they assumed the vote indicated that the days of the

sanctions were numbered or the inspectors no longer had international backing. Mr. Butler noted that critics of the resolution did not support the U.S.-British draft "but they didn't veto it either."

The resolution expresses the "firm intention" of the council to ban Iraqi military and intelligence officials from travelling abroad unless Baghdad cooperates fully with the U.N. inspectors.

In the meantime, the council will draw up a list of Iraqis who would be affected by the ban.

Some analysts regard the outcome as a setback for the U.S. and Britain because of their goal of maintaining a solid front against Iraq. They were concerned that Iraq might otherwise decide to step up its defiance.

Also, the U.S. and Britain had wanted the council to impose the travel ban on April 12 if the next six-month report by U.N. inspectors showed continued Iraqi obstruction. They deleted that provision after objections from France, Russia and Egypt, but still failed to win the support of those countries.

Mr. McClelleny acknowledged that the negotiating process at the council is "messy" at times but said that

should not obscure the continued support of all council members for maintaining existing sanctions against Iraq.

During the council meeting Thursday, ambassadors of the five countries that abstained said the resolution should have taken note of Iraq's progress in destroying long-range missiles and dismantling its nuclear weapons research programmes.

"What they were trying to say is the progress that has been made in disarmament is the most important thing and that the other blockages that have been encountered relative to that progress were less important," Mr. Butler said.

"Abstentions were possible only because they had made progress, as all members made clear," Mr. Butler added. "The only way for Iraq to get out of sanctions is through the disarmament of weapons of mass destruction."

Mr. Butler said he would deliver that interpretation to the Iraqis when he travels to Baghdad in two weeks.

In Baghdad, Iraq's two highest ruling bodies on Friday deferred an immediate response to the U.N. resolution and decided to refer it to parliament.

Mideast's biggest wargames proceed

AL OMAIED (AFP) — Hundreds of Egyptian and U.S. soldiers began the "Bright Star 97" military exercises, the largest military manoeuvres in the Middle East, Saturday along the desert coast of the Mediterranean.

Lieutenant Mark Bayd, spokesman for the U.S. Navy, said "500 U.S. marines from the 24th marine expeditionary unit and about 200 Egyptian commandos have been landing by seven ships under the protection of 26 aircraft."

In this year's manoeuvres, Bright Star is outlasting enemy forces occupying the desert territory of an allied country.

In all, 58,000 soldiers from seven countries, 337 aircraft, 34 warships and thousands of tanks and other vehicles will take part in Bright Star 97 which will last until Nov. 2.

In addition to Egypt and the U.S., Britain, France, Italy, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates will participate in the exercises.

No real shots were fired Saturday. "It is an unopposed landing which takes place in a region not yet occupied by the enemy," Lieut. Bayd said.

"Four successive waves lasted two hours," an Egyptian military spokesman said. "The first consisted of Egyptian commandos landing to prepare the ground for the other three waves of U.S. marines and Egyptian soldiers," he said.

Air cover was provided by a squadron of Egyptian F-4 and F-16 planes and U.S. and British helicopters.

The marines headed for the coast on patrol boats and amphibious vehicles from troop transport ships.

The last wave included three U.S. amphibious vehicles on air cushions each carrying an M-60 tank and M-113 troop transport vehicle.

When they arrived on solid land, the soldiers prepared their positions for phase two, scheduled for Tuesday, during which the "allies" will attack the "enemies."



Protesters, playing the role of victims of a nuclear disaster, lie over mock barrels of nuclear waste during an anti-nuclear protest in Taipei Sunday. Thousands of activists marched through the streets of Taipei to voice their opposition to a planned nuclear station and a possible U.S.-China deal that would allow U.S. nuclear reactor sales to Beijing (Reuters photo)

Mandela to revisit Libya this week with news on Lockerbie

CAIRO (AFP) — South African President Nelson Mandela will visit Libya this week to reveal "important news" on the row between Tripoli and the West over the trial of two Libyans suspected of the Lockerbie bombing, an Egyptian official said Sunday.

There is a very strong possibility of a meeting between (Libyan leader Muammar) Qadhafi and Mandela late on Tuesday at an unspecified border town, a diplomat at the South African embassy in Cairo told Agence France Presse.

The former political prisoner visited Tripoli only last week for talks with President Qadhafi, in a snub to Washington which regards Libya as a "rogue" state involved in international terrorism.

The South African leader promised to try to mediate between Libya and the West in their bitter dispute over the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie in Scotland which killed 270 people.

The press centre of the Egyptian information ministry announced plans to arrange for journalists to visit Libya on Tuesday and Wednesday "to take part in a press conference with the South African president dur-

ing which he will reveal important news about the Lockerbie affair."

Libya has been under U.N. sanctions since April 1992 for its refusal to hand over to Britain or the U.S. the two Libyans suspected of involvement in the Lockerbie bombing.

Tripoli wants the two to be tried in a neutral court, a demand rejected by both London and Washington.

The former South African rights activist, who last week hailed President Qadhafi as "my friend" who supported his struggle against apartheid, said he backed the Libyan leader's demands and called for the sanctions to be lifted.

"I have never thought it is correct for any country to be complainant, prosecutor and judge," he told a press conference at a summit of Commonwealth leaders in Edinburgh on Saturday.

"I have a grave concern where one country would be all these things at the same time," he added.

Support for a neutral trial has also come from the Organisation of African Unity, the Arab League, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the non-aligned movement as well as some of the victims' relatives.

Jim Swire, father of one of the victims, said Sunday he was "more optimistic than for years" of progress towards a trial of the two Libyan suspects.

Mr. Swire, who lost his daughter Flora, was to discuss the issue with British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook on the sidelines of the Commonwealth summit.

Mr. Swire, a spokesman for the British relatives of those who died, said he would be happy to see a Scottish court sitting in a neutral country, possibly at the Hague Court, to try the suspects.

But British Foreign Secretary Cook repeated the British position that the trial should be held in Scotland and rejected any suggestion the Libyans would not get a fair trial.

A British government spokesman said Britain was prepared to allow international representatives to come and study the judicial system to see for themselves that the Libyans would get a free trial.

Meanwhile, Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul Meguid has decided to cancel a planned visit to Britain next month because of London's stance over the Lockerbie suspects, a league official said Sunday.



Blair had bad grammar and long hair

LONDON (AFP) — British Prime Minister Tony Blair was once arrested after being mistaken for a burglar, had unacceptably long hair and bad grammar, his former teacher said in an interview here. Eric Anderson, Blair's housemaster at the private boarding school Fettes College in Scotland, recalled in the Daily Telegraph how Blair and two 16-year-old friends stole out of the school for a night in Edinburgh. Returning after midnight to find all doors back into the school locked, Blair and his friends took a nearby ladder and tried to climb in through a window. "Unfortunately for them a passing taxi driver, who thought they were burglars, called the police with the result that Tony — who was still only halfway up the ladder — was arrested by an Edinburgh constable with a dog, and brought to me for punishment," said Anderson.

Oasis to donate concert profits in memory of Diana

LONDON (AFP) — British supergroup Oasis will donate all profits from a concert in Paris to an AIDS charity in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, their record company said Sunday. The money raised from the Nov. 4 show will go to London Lighthouse, the biggest European organisation which supports victims of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. "All the members of the group were very affected by the manner in which the princess died and also feel that the London Lighthouse does very good work," said Johnny Hopkins, spokesman for Creation Records. "They chose the Paris gig because it is the biggest and also because the princess died in Paris," he said. There will be an estimated 17,000 fans at the Paris concert.

Judges stoned at pot-growers' contest

MADRID (R) — Spanish marijuana growers staged their first-ever contest to choose the best cannabis crop, but judges — who had to smoke 10 different samples — were in no condition to pick a winner. Defying Spain's drug laws, which are among the most lenient in Europe, 51 marijuana lovers who cultivate cannabis legally for their own use gathered at a private club to compete for the first annual Madrid marijuana cup. "The growers, acting as their own judges, wasted no time in dividing up the samples, rolling joints and lighting up. Clouds of aromatic smoke wafted across the room. 'We are holding this competition to lobby for a law allowing us to grow marijuana for our own private consumption,'" said Javier Mestre, vice president of the Association for the Study of Cannabis, which sponsored the contest.

Skinny lawmaker gets courtesy for obese law passed

BRASILIA (AFP) — Brazil's federal district, Brasilia, has passed a law requiring public accommodation for obese people, at the urging of a thin lawmaker. Under the measure, movie theatres and other cultural facilities are required to make three per cent of their seats available to severely overweight people. The law also requires public transit to set aside at least one seat per vehicle for the obese. The measure was sponsored by Miquelias Paz, a local deputy who said he wants overweight Brazilians to be able to ride a bus or watch a movie without being humiliated or squeezed by tiny seats.

New Japan peace initiative aims at Israeli pullout from Lebanon

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Japan has put forward a peace proposal calling for an unconditional Israeli army pullout from Lebanon followed by U.S., Japanese and European economic pressure on Syria and Lebanon to ensure the security of Israel's northern border, an Israeli newspaper reported Sunday.

The Yediot Achronot, quoting senior Japanese diplomats, said the proposal was being circulated as part of a broader effort by Tokyo to become more deeply involved in efforts to revive the Middle East peace process.

The two-stage Japanese initiative starts with an unconditional troop withdrawal from the self-declared "security

zone Israel has occupied in south Lebanon since 1985.

Immediately after the pullout, Japan would join with the U.S. and the European Union in a concerted initiative putting economic and political pressure on both Lebanon and Syria to prevent Islamists and Palestinian guerrillas from attacking Israel from Lebanon.

"There are forces, not necessarily military ones, which can be deployed effectively" to ensure the security of northern Israel, Yediot quoted a senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official as saying in an interview.

The government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected grow-

ing calls from segments of the Israeli opposition and public for a unilateral withdrawal from the "self-declared" Lebanon.

Mr. Netanyahu insists that Israel can only leave the self-declared zone following a political agreement with Lebanon and Syria which would involve the disarming of the Lebanese resistance, primarily Hizbollah.

The Israeli government says Syria, which has some 35,000 troops inside Lebanon, promotes attacks on Israel by Hizbollah and other guerrilla movements to pressure the Jewish state to return the occupied Golan Heights to Damascus.